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ADULT LEADER

A Journal of Christian Education and Church Work; with Study and Teaching Material for the Uniform (International) Lessons

Vol. XII DECEMBER, 1936 No. 12

"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy"

F. Lagarde

The American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, Pa.

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e Uniform Lessons in 1937

The first quarter, January to March, will be de- ed to a study of the Gospel of John, with the "Aim encourage the student to seek an understanding of deeply spiritual message of this Gospel and to er into loving fellowship with the Father and his Jesus Christ." The second quarter, April to e, will survey the entire Book of Genesis, with the m to lead the student to understand and appreciate practical significance of Genesis with particular erence to God as the Creator, to the lives of out- ding personalities, and to the establishment of al and social standards." The third quarter, July September, will have as its theme "God in the king of a Nation," based upon a study of passages n Exodus and Deuteronomy. The last quarter of year, October to December, will be given to udies in the Christian Life," the Scriptures being cted from various New Testament books.

The Messianic Hope

In the days just before the arrival of the Christmas festival I never fail to think of those who historically anticipated the Advent. The Messianic hope that persisted age after age, not only in Israel but in some form or other among all peoples, that gained strength from discouragement and triumphed in disappointment, is one of the most marvelous phenomena in the career of mankind. But besides the general belief in the coming of a Deliverer there were always a few who cherished this belief in a more pronounced and confident form, and it is of them that I more particularly think.

Watchers for the Dawning

We say, Blessed were those who received Christ Jesus when he appeared. But our honoring should go back and fall upon those also who watched in hope and expectancy for the dawning of the Sun of Righteousness when as yet the eastern horizon of events was uncolored by any morning light. We remember how our Lord himself signalized the faith of Abraham, "Father of the faithful," pioneer of faith, as being at its greatest when it could look down the impenetrable ages and be glad in His appearing. Messianism in the prophets of the Old Testament is the finest exhibition of religious faith that the world has ever witnessed. National disasters and personal misfortunes fell thick upon the people of Israel, but these men of God of theirs kept insisting that it was all but a portent of a springtime, and the shooting forth of the divine branch of the Davidic stem. And so when I stand in imagination with the Magi and the shepherds around the cradle of the divine child, in imagination I see there likewise Isaiah and Micah, Malachi and Zechariah.

That Kind of Faith

Did they half imagine that they should never see their hope's fulfilment in the arrival of the Messianic King? It is likely. But there is a deal of that sort of faith. More than a few of our promised lands we have to view not otherwise than in Pisgah mountain visions. "He died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off" is a common epitaph. The father and mother, for example, are all the time working and planning for a life for their child that they can scarce hope to see in its realization. Every man who undertakes any great enterprise promotive of his fellows' welfare must labor and strive in such faith. "It takes faith to sow acorns and olive pits," says an Oriental proverb; and a true statesman has been denominated "a day-after-tomorrow man."

Real Realizations

In a general sense we don't often see the good arrive. But faith says that it has come—and so we know that it has. You pray, and your unbelieving heart says, "Alas! what I wanted isn't given." Your believing heart, however, says that it is. To your faith your prayer has been answered because it shall be. The truth we have put into the commonplace poetry line, "'Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all." That is, true love can know no loss; it has realized itself in the joy of loving. It is just the same with faith. Those prophetic spirits of the Old Testament, from Abraham down to Malachi, who watched for Christ shared much of the Christian experience, of the Christian joy, because they watched with mighty—if unrealized—faith.

The Joy of Faith, in the Anticipation

The anticipation is, proverbially, more delightful than the realization. Perhaps, also, God makes up to us in the heavenly beholding for the glory that we miss here below. If those faithful watchers of ancient Israel saw no starry heavens and descending angels and heard no celestial music, surely they beheld in their after-glory home a greater glory of the Messianic Lord.

Simeon and Anna

In them we find another type of those who were watching for the Advent. Of the former it says that he was "waiting for the consolation of Israel," assured by the Spirit that he should not meet death before he had seen the Christ; of the latter we are told that she spent her whole time in the Temple, as the likeliest place to see the Coming One appear. In these two and such as they the Messianic hope h grown to fullest ripeness, had become absolute c tainty instead of a hope. Jesus spoke of a faith t can do anything. Sometimes the very daring ass ance of man's outreaching seems to win the gift God—so influenced is he, God, by the persistent p of unbounded faith. Might we say that the indo table faith and eager expectation of Simeon and An and such as they made the time "full" for the Lor appearing? If you are as solicitous in your faith they were the longed-for blessing will never be wi holden. Your real desire, expressed in your fai will appeal mightily to God. If you make a large pl for Christ in your life he will not be able to resist temptation to come and dwell there. On the ot hand, little of the spirit of Christ is going to come you unless your life is made open to its coming—" windows wide apart, for the breaking of the light."

A Nativity Picture

And wasn't it fine that these two aged saints Israel did live to see the realization of their Messia hope! Simeon with the child in his arms and A praising God with her broken voice for the way which he had blessed her—there you have one of most pleasing pictures of the whole New Testam story; while the *Nunc Dimittis* of Simeon has m itself the death-song of countless followers of Holy Child. The soul that has waited and watche faithfully and hopefully as Simeon did will always able in its last hour to echo his words, "Now let thou thy servant depart in peace."

The Wise-Men

They represent another class of watchers for Messiah. They were of a Gentile race, therefor

A WORLD THAT HEARD THE ANGELS

By Kathrine Hymas Williams

"There will be wars till time is time no longer,
Destruction, cannon play;
Gold trimming, scarlet capes"—his tones grew stronger—
"And dragons more to slay!
This is the world, the counterfeit of heaven,
Heaven's perfectness to mock;
And since the key to that fair realm was given,
We have misplaced the lock!"

Benignantly the other spoke: "Remember,
This is that selfsame world
Whose listening shepherds in a dim December,
When angel voices purled
The air, arose, nor let their footsteps linger
To sigh if near or far,
His blessed light would lead, his beckoning finger,
His peace-heralding star!"

at uncertainty about his appearing; so they came king. There are various types of the religious- nded. This man can just sit and wait and it will come home to his soul, the new truth about God, l the appearing of his Christ. He waits in temple— l he trusts—and he sees. Then here is another man o can't find the Lord in that way; he must go a g pilgrimage, follow his star, search, inquire, doubt, ove. You shall not criticise him for this, condemn questionings and agnosticism, you who are easily home " in the temple." Perhaps he deserves a great al more credit than you do; perhaps his is a higher e of faith than yours, which might not have been ong enough to go forth on such a quest as he is lling to make. How often did Jesus say, in one way another, that it is those who seek him who find n! And so God.

ne Voice

John the Baptist stands for still another class of the tchers for the Lord. The characteristic thing about n is that he was not only expecting and watching, t that he went to work getting things ready, ready the Messiah's coming. There was plenty of Mes- nic faith in those days; the eyes of all the world, indeed, were straining toward a Saviour's epiphany; but something more than that was called for. The prophets had said over and over again that God's Anointed would never come until his people made due preparation therefor. John was one of the very few who heeded that word. On this account Jesus pronounced him greatest of prophets—of all those by whom he had been anticipated.

Shall We Be John the Baptists?

We want Christ to come to our lives, assuredly; come again, and again; more fully come; and to the world. We should be Johns; not simply watch for him, in a passive, idle way, but go out and herald him; be voices: " Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" You are praying—longing, perhaps—for a deeper Christian experience, but dare you be Christ's forerunner into your own life, leveling and filling in, and removing obstacles? Likewise for his coming into the world at large—there is a vast amount of preparation that someone must make: " Straight the way of the Lord." And if Christ's followers are not his messengers, " before his face," to do this work, who will be, and who will do it? How dependent he is on us!

John's Vision on Patmos

By JOHN SNAPE, D. D., Los Angeles, California

There is an unwholesome and unreasonable preju- e against the study of the Apocalypse. Notwith- nding it is the only prophetic book of the New stament and a special message of the ascended Lord his churches on the earth, and that the reading, aring and keeping of the words of it are urged upon attention in language strong, inspiring and beauti- , there are many ministers and many Bible students o talk constantly of its enigmas and glory in their bility to interpret it.

Paul declares that " all Scripture is given by inspira- n of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness, that man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished o all good works." We may well, therefore, nbly ask the question whether there is not some- ng wrong with the " furnishing " of the Christian— an of God "—who refuses the Apocalypse a place is affection and thinking.

Prophecy is history written beforehand "—but it is re than that. Prophecy is the declaration of God's as that will is interpreted in the light of the past, present and the future of the human race. Nothing could be more disastrous to the spirit of Christian cosmopolitanism than the mere noting of passing events as they pass. Any chronicler may set down events, but only a historian can set them down in juxtaposition to other events, and only a philosopher may interpret them. Secular history is, after all, history overruled and underlined by Deity's hand. The true Christian historian must be poet, metaphysician, philosopher, scribe, prophet, and Christian.

In John's introduction to the Book of the Revelation we get a picture of the aged seer, committed to the lonely island in the Ægean Sea—for the Word of God (i. e., the Old Testament) and the testimony of Jesus Christ (i. e., the New Testament). Though exiled from those he knew and loved, he is still near enough to them to call himself their " brother," and their " companion in tribulation." In this remarkable verse he sets forth four things: (1) A common brotherhood in Christ; (2) A common suffering for Christ; (3) A common kingship with Christ; (4) A common coronation at the hands of Christ.

The lonely apostle on the lonely island was commanded to write " the things which he had seen," " the

things which are," and "the things which shall be hereafter." That makes a fair outline of the book: the things which thou hast seen—chapter one; the things which are—chapters two and three; the things which shall be hereafter—chapter four to the end of the book.

There are three schools of interpretation of the Apocalypse: the Preterists believe that it has been already fulfilled; the historical interpreters think that the book is a record of the church of Christ in conflict with her foes through all time; the futurists believe that Antichrist is yet to appear, and that therefore a large part of the Apocalypse remains to be fulfilled. To be sure, they differ as to whether Hitler or Mussolini is Antichrist, but they rather incline toward Mussolini, because of his interest in the restoration of the Roman Empire.

I do not join with those who with cocksureness set the exact date of Christ's return, or with those who believe that the wonderful events as outlined in the Apocalypse are yet to be fulfilled. In one pastorate I preached fifty sermons on the Book of the Revelation. That was thirty years ago. But why not—I understood the Apocalypse thirty years ago.

Two things save us from any attempt to fix the date: the fact that one day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day; and in the parabolic teaching of Jesus we learn that the Lord of the vineyard may return "after a long time." One of these Scriptures will save us from indolence and the other will save us from presumption.

An apocalypse is just the opposite of an apocrapha. It is almost equivalent to a revelation. It means something disclosed—uncovered to human view. In the Apocalypse there are three apocalypses—an apocalypse of Christ in his relation to the churches on the earth; an apocalypse of Christ in his relation to the church in heaven; an apocalypse of Christ in his relation to the world.

What a wonderful vision is set forth in this first chapter of the Revelation, of the striding Son of man in the midst of the candlesticks. In John's Gospel Jesus, while retaining his humanity, is yet preeminently set forth as to his deity; in the Revelation, while retaining his deity, he is preeminently set forth as to his humanity. John saw him as the Son of man in the midst of the candlesticks.

It is a night scene, for we read of candlesticks and stars; it is a day scene, for the countenance of Christ is as "the sun shineth in his strength." At first the vision seems to be self-contradictory, but presently we see instruction rather than confusion in the symbolism. The night is the time of the world's darkness—to the world it is always night-time. "The whole world lieth in darkness." The shining countenance of Christ is revelation of what Christ is to his own. To them it always daytime—"ye are sons of light, and not darkness."

In the vision itself we see the church's true fu tion—to give light. The church is not the cand stick, but the lamp-stand. It is not, therefore, se consumptive; the oil is the oil of the Holy Spirit.

We see also the church's true unity—a common lationship to the Son of man in the midst. Christ present in the church walking majestically. I can understand this, but neither can I understand how presence fills an auditorium. Call it voice, or pers ality, or magnetism, or soul—call it whatever y please—but here I am, present to everybody who present. Push the walls of a great auditorium until you conceive of the world as one vast cathed and the unlimited Christ, with voice like the sound many streams filling the whole, and you have so slight conception of what it means when we read the "Son of man in the midst of the candlesticks."

We see also the church's true ministry—heavenly character, with its authority derived from Christ.

But when we come to the central Figure, we like John himself in the vision; we fall before supernatural, supernal glory, dazed and dead.

Here is the human Christ. He stands before us the "Son of man." The expression "Son of ma is used eighty-five times in the Four Gospels, eighty-three of those times on the lips of Christ.

John sets him forth as the kingly Christ. His r reached to the foot, and was girt about the bre with a golden girdle. This hints of three thin judicial authority, infinite love, infinite faithfulnes

The patriarchal Christ. His head and hair w white like wool, as white as snow. Two facts are h set forth: the purity of Christ, the eternity of Ch

The omniscient Christ. His eyes were like flam fire, hinting of infinite and infallible knowledge. feet, like unto fine brass, as if they burned i furnace; the feet themselves, the symbol of cedure; the fire of purity; the brass of strength. voice was "like the sound of many waters"— streams of art, science, music and literature meet merge in him. In his right hand there are s stars—symbol of authoritative administration protection.

Out of his mouth came a "sharp two-edged swo —not a steel sword, but a word-sword. This m of him the judging Christ. His countenance wa the sun shineth in his strength. No wonder the seer fell at his feet as dead—perhaps fell dead— the touch of Christ was necessary to bring him to

John must write the things which he had seen.

(*Concluded on page 365*)

FOR THIS I PRAY

(A Christmas Sketch)

By Browne Sampsell, Winchester, Va.

Early in the morning of a gray December day a man and a woman stood on a street-corner waiting for a bus to take them to work. They were old, poor and shabby; shoulders bowed, eyes dull, and faces weary with the struggle of living in this world.

"Are you ready for this thing called Christmas?" asked the woman, twisting her lips into an expression of disgust.

"Just as ready as I'll ever be," the man replied. "Guess I'm getting old, Miss Mary, but Christmas don't mean a thing to me any more. Only last night I was kidding the wife about her tramping to all the churches in town to hear the same old thing in all of them, 'Peace on Earth,' 'Joy to the World'—and how?" he sneered.

In pained silence I listened to this pair, I whose heart always leaps with the joy, the beauty and the wonder of the holy Nativity Day. As I wondered how people could feel like this man and woman about this lovely day of poetry, even in a cold, hard world, this prayer rose unbidden to my lips:

At this season of universal giving, when men want and ask for so many different things, for this alone, O Gracious Lord, I humbly pray!

Grant unto me, O Giver of every good and perfect gift, the spirit of the Christ who gave us Christmas Day, this day of love and joy and beauty and spiritual riches!

That I may pass through things temporal without losing the eternal!

That the material may not blot out of my life the spiritual, the "good part," the gracious, the fine and the true!

May no earthly care or burden, or weariness of spirit, hush for me the song of the angels, or blind my eyes to the light of Bethlehem's star!

May each Christmas Day find me worshiping at the manger of the infant Jesus!

May I always find at this manger the handclasp of Divine Love, unchanging hope when dark my way is, peace on earth, good-will toward men, and joy to all the world!

May I receive with meek heart the greatest gift that can ever be offered me—a personal Saviour!

May nothing on earth below or heaven above crowd out of the inn of my heart this Saviour!

In the name of and for the sake of him in whom is the life which is the light of men! Amen.

Is Evil Too Strong for Divided Forces?[1]

By IVAN LEE HOLT, Ph. D., D. D., LL. D.
President of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America

With the arrest of a noted gangster, J. Edgar Hoover made the statement that there are three million criminals who commit sixteen million crimes in the United States each year. Recently Will Durant declared that this generation of ours is the most unscrupulous of all the generations of men. Not only is there wide-spread crime, but there has been a lowering of moral standards.

We can well speculate on our spiritual age as a nation. As we think of the United States we know the physical age of the country. No one would claim its mental age is the same as its physical age. There are many indications that its spiritual age is not the same as its mental age. Lawlessness and crime are among these indications; lack of interest in religion and the better life are further indications. As we face the economic depression we are more and more conscious of ethical failure. Instability in our economic and political orders can be traced to moral weakness in personal life. The prophets of Israel used to emphasize this truth. How many times they cried out that the nation would fail because the people had forgotten God.

A century ago F. W. H. Myers and George Eliot were walking in the garden of Trinity College, Cambridge, talking of God, immortality and duty. George Eliot said, "It is impossible for an intelligent person to believe in God. Faith in immortality is gone. I want to hold on to duty." Myers comments that it is impossible to hold on to moral standards when one has surrendered belief in God and immortality. A century has passed since then. In the two decades since the close of the Great War we have justification for the fear of Doctor Myers. The self-restraint of the Puritans has constantly been ridiculed, and the Protestant church has lost much of its influence in the field of morals.

Two years ago an American opera, at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, criticised the Puritans as joy-killers: A group of settlers in a Puritan community goes into the forest and has a May-pole dance. Learning of the blasphemy, the community leaders attack the dancers with their swords. The impression created was that religion restrains the wholesome joys of life. The moral ideals of religion were cynically criticised. Present-day Christians would not insist that the Puritans were always right, nor that they had the highest and finest conceptio of religion, but our age suffers from a growing co viction that they were entirely wrong. The lines right and wrong are separate and distinct, and t new naturalism cannot blend them without distin hurt to the human race. The propaganda for evil enthusiastic and effective. The forces of righteou ness are struggling against evil, and at the same ti against a mood which makes their very efforts ineff tive in our present atmosphere of evil.

The helplessness of the divided church is reveal in its inability to stop preparations for war and bring about an order of economic justice. Since t close of the Great War we have been seeking create the "peace mind." We have multiplied ag cies of peace education and propaganda until there now seventy-two peace organizations in the Uni States. With all of this provision for peace educati we see nations drifting toward war, and we find o selves defeated in the effort to prevent vast expen tures for the army and navy of the United Sta With millions of people suffering under the pres economic system, we are unable to propose accepta plans for a better one. In many of the Protest denominations there are serious threats of divis over economic issues, and in many instances there rift between ministers and laymen, because we h not developed and used effective means of achiev unified purposes, common ideals and a common m on such issues.

Surely it is apparent that the forces of evil in world are too powerful to be effectively opposed b divided Christendom. At the Lausanne Confere Bishop Charles Henry Brent declared that "the w is too strong for a divided church." This is v evident when we think about the strength of evi our contemporary life. As an illustration of the in ence of a united church I might instance the refo in the character of motion-pictures brought about the Legion of Decency of the Roman Catholic Chu Protestant ministers have talked, and Protes assemblies have passed resolutions about the evil in ence of some vicious motion-pictures, but no atten was paid to these protests. Whether one has in m the local community, or a nation, or the world, realizes that much of the strength of Protestan is spent in the maintenance of separate and uncoo nated denominational programs. It is a rare inst when the united strength of Protestant forces ca directed against a gigantic evil. I find myself m

[1] This is one of a series of articles made available through the International Council of Religious Education as a means of making effective the current emphasis on the community under the slogan "Building Together a Christian Community."

d more convinced that we can never have a Christian ciety until we forget many of the things that sepate us into denominations and give adequate practical pression to the essential unity which we all claim Christ.

What is so evident in the world at large is equally parent in the local community. The distressing lief situation is a concern of every church. In most our cities, however, one group faces the problem e week and another group is aroused the next week. o single group has influence to produce any result. hen we turn to problems of social immorality we d the same ineffective spasmodic efforts. In Mony morning's paper there is sure to be reported at ast one sermon that seeks to correct social evils. hen the Social Hygiene Society launches a reformaon program, it cannot enlist enough church support succeed. More than once I have known of some ry unfair labor situation about which a Protestant inister has become exercised. He arouses a few llow ministers, and the little group seeks to correct e abuse, while the church at large remains indiffert. The injustice continues.

The American community is usually poorly govned. It is so easy for political bosses to dominate d control. Sometimes the situation becomes unarable, and a minister raises his voice in protest. e may gain enough support to put a stop to the more grant forms of political corruption, but the reform ave soon passes. In periodic revolts against Tamany Hall reform mayors have been elected in New ork. Such reformations are short-lived, and forthth Tammany Hall comes back into power. If there ere a united religious support these reformations ght be more permanent. There are scores of similar ustrations of the weakness of religious effort as a rrective force in the community life.

We have realized this weakness and have created any agencies of cooperation. We have now come to e time when these agencies themselves are in need closer coordination. In many cities and in several tes these agencies of interdenominational cooperan are merging for more effective work. The several tional interdenominational agencies are also provid- for a closer coordination of their activities. We ght to have enough statesmanship in Protestantism eliminate duplication among local churches and ong denominational programs.

If we cannot come together in one church, there are o things we can do. In the first place, we can study r program of cooperation and seek to coordinate ther the work of overlapping agencies. In the ond place, we can emphasize closer federation, until approximate a united movement. Last autumn Stanley Jones made an appeal in the *Christian ntury* for a united Protestantism. He seems to visualize closer federation rather than organic union, and it may be that we shall have to make our approach to union through such a closer federation. It is not so easy to unite denominations in this country as in Canada. Here in the States we have a more heterogeneous population, stronger denominational emphases and much larger memberships. There have been some significant unions, and there are negotiations in progress for others. As this process continues we can urge such understanding and cooperation as will make Protestantism conscious of its potential strength. We can lay hands on things that are permanent and essential and bring them forth for our people to see. In developing this consciousness of things we have in common we can bring our strength to bear on the problems of evil in our world. If Christendom were only united it would win for righteousness many a battle which it is now losing. Evil is indeed proving too strong for divided Christian forces. A more united front would help to answer the prayer of our Lord that " they all may be one." It would also enable the church as such to obey the apostle's admonition, " Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

" It's Me, O Lord! "

The most discouraging feature of many of our meetings for missions, for personal religion, and for social action is the constant reiteration of the sins of others. The missionary meetings emphasize the sins of other religions. The social enthusiasts shout out the sins of the hard-boiled tories. One can tell immediately what group he is in because the sins that are mentioned are always those of the opposite group. What would happen if a group of conservatives and a group of radicals held meetings to enumerate and denounce their own sins and failures? It might be a Pentecost. Some day some religious group is going to startle the world. It may be a meeting for evangelism, or for missions; it may be a conservative, or a radical group; but it will startle the world by saying:

" It ain't my brother, but it's me, O Lord,
Standin' in the need of prayer."

—Russell J. Clinchy, in " The Maritime Baptist."

In 1817 John Mason Peck found St. Louis " a most ungodly little settlement." He was confronted with the oft-repeated remark, " The Sabbath will never cross the Mississippi." Today St. Louis and all those other " Beyond the Mississippi " great towns have their large and splendid churches and their noble Christian folk. Our American Baptist Home Mission Society has had much to do with bringing this about.

The Liquor Problem Today

By DEETS PICKETT

Director of the Board of Temperance, Prohibition and Public Morals of the Methodist Episcopal Church

III. A SEARCH FOR THE REASONS

Suggested Scripture: Psalm 34:4, 5

The alcohol question is a kind of root problem the settlement of which would necessarily involve an adjustment of innumerable other things which have a destructive effect on every hand.[1]

Why Do Men Drink?

For a generation psychologists have been profoundly interested in discovering the answer to this problem. Here we have an admittedly dangerous custom. Through the ages men mighty in peace and war have been its victims. Its consequences lie heavily upon the entire social organization. Why then do sensible men and women, persons of understanding and character, incur the perils of this custom and help to inflict upon society its heavy injuries? In the words of Abraham Lincoln:

> Whether or not the world would be vastly benefited by a total and final banishment from it of all intoxicating drinks seems to me not now an open question. Three-fourths of mankind confess the affirmative with their tongues and I believe all the rest acknowledge it in their hearts. Ought any, then, to refuse their aid in doing what the whole good of the country demands?

Still men drink and drink.

We Should Reexamine the Custom

Neither historic sanction nor universality in themselves justify the drink custom. Every generation has the right to bring conventionalism in thought and habit to the bar for judgment. Certainly the old ways should not be despised merely because they are old, but they should be closely examined for justification in reason and altruism. "Despise not prophesyings; prove all things; hold fast to that which is good." Whether or not youth takes to drink will determine the future of a traffic and a custom; it will perhaps determine the future of the country itself. The liquor trade is keenly alive to this fact. "We want to get the beer-drinking habit instilled into thousands, almost millions, of young men who do not at present know the taste of beer," said Sir Edgar Sanders, director of the Brewers' Society of Great Britain, at Birmingham, England, on June 15, 1933. An advertisement in *Brewery Industry,* New York, November 19, 1932, said: "Half of the expected market for beer does not exist today. Obviously there must be a campaign of education. Beer can be restored to its former fa in colleges, which means the youth of the land."

The Stimulation Motive

The fact that the custom of drinking intoxicati liquors was from the very first polygenetic, seemin originating among all peoples independently rat than by spreading from tribe to tribe, does not indic as has been claimed that the use of alcohol is natu that there is an "intoxication impulse" in the hum organization, and that the use of alcohol as a bevera is, therefore, to some extent necessary and good. rather indicates that the cause of the use of alco is to be found in a natural impulse.

Polygamy and sexual promiscuity were also po genetic; certainly war has been a universal pract since time began.

There is no natural impulse to seek intoxication, there is an impulse among undeveloped individuals races to surge forward, impatient of the more orde processes of development, into wider spiritual a mental experience. There also is an impulse amo decadent nations and senile individuals or amo nations and individuals which are approaching de dence or senility to attain again by great effort or s cial means the vigorous mental and spiritual life their better days. This is why nations which striving toward cultural development are plagued w intoxication, as were the American Colonies a hund and fifty years ago, and why such nations as Gre and Rome, past the peak of attainment, were ch acterized by drunkenness and debauchery. In ot words, there is a *stimulation* impulse.

Perverting an Instinct

Our savage forefathers sought in the use of alco ecstatic feeling, a sense of increased power, drea that ushered them into a world of wider experien This impulse flowed into a wrong channel when sought the use of intoxicants, but nevertheless it w an impulse to seek a life of more intense action a feeling. While the use of intoxicants has contribu nothing to the advance of man, the impulse behind has been a force which has propelled us forward.

We will understand this desire if we recognize as an effort to attain increased functioning of mind, keener perception and emotional feeling. All us feel within our being suppressed emotions, pri

[1] Sir Vesey Strong, late lord mayor of London.

tive longings, strong and striving, but buried beneath the inhibitions of civilization. Undeveloped people seek to escape from their own stupidities and emotional dulness by seeking neurotic conditions, working themselves into frenzy by rhythmical movement and sound, regarding epilepsy and chorea as divine.

Alcohol Is Not a Stimulant

While the stimulation motive is natural and legitimate, the whole truth is that alcohol is not a stimulant.[2]

Medical and scientific opinion is, broadly speaking, unanimous in regard to this. Alcohol is an irritant, narcotic poison. It narcotizes nerve centers which control mental and physical activities. These nerve centers are the dispatchers that control the movements of the muscles. When they are narcotized they are of course forced to release their control over muscular activity. Thus the first apparent effect is one of stimulation, but as a matter of fact no real power has been gained, no increase in functional activity has taken place. The man or woman who seeks to increase his mental or muscular power by the use of alcohol does two things: (1) he actually decreases his abilities, and (2) he creates the *feeling* that he has increased them. The cocktails which are served on a social occasion do not add to the brilliance of the conversation: they simply make the guests at once loquacious and foolish. The attempt to prod a reluctant brain with doses of whisky is never successful unless there has first been established a tolerance, in which case drink may tend to reestablish the normal.

The Escape Motive

The stimulation motive, however, does not stand alone as the source of the drink custom. The motive of escape is universally recognized as primary. This motive is especially strong in the modern day when the weight of an artificial civilization is so heavy upon us all. Alcohol is the historic resource of the man with an inferiority complex. There is no doubt as to the legitimacy of this motive; there is great doubt as to the legitimacy of alcohol as a means of satisfying it. Human nature demands recreation and relaxation. We want to forget the cares and duties of life, especially those cares and duties to which we feel inadequate. But alcohol as an escape outlet is an unnatural method involving reaction. It removes the feeling of fatigue or depression by desensitizing the nervous system, but this only causes the user to neglect seeking true releases and sometimes leads him to flog his system to unwise effort, inevitably suffering reaction. The reserves of nervous force are dangerously drained and the narcotic dose must be constantly increased to get a like effect. "Alcohol always seems to transport me to a rosier world," said a young lady in one of our colleges, but her witty roommate answered, "Yes, but what about the return trip?" The reaction is always inevitable and prolonged; the rosy hues fade with the dawn of blue tomorrow. There is no killjoy like alcohol.

"Death to killjoys! And death accordingly, in my view, to alcohol as in the end thereof the greatest killjoy upon earth," says Dr. C. W. Saleeby, one of the world's leading eugenists, in an article in the *Spectator*. "Life to all means of life—light and food and water and air and exercise and music and everything that makes us gay but is not a 'mocker' as the Semitic sage knew alcohol to be. No city stays 'miserably drab' which renounces alcohol and spends its money on non-mockers."

Modern Drink Motive

But the primary drink motives recognized in the perversion of instincts to seek stimulation and escape are by no means the only motives, nor indeed are they perhaps the strongest motives responsible for the modern drink custom. There is the social motive which springs from the sharing impulse of primitive man but which today is very much more formidable than it was under the conditions of the Stone Age. We drink to conform, despite the counsel of the Good Book: "Be ye not conformed to this world." The drink custom is social; the solitary drinker is looked at askance. About it has gathered myth and superstition, literature and song have adorned it with a reputation of good fellowship. The savage and barbarian associated drink with state ceremonials, worship, birth, marriage, death festivals, dances; but the eating of human flesh is similarly associated in the cannibal islands. Jack London, whose raw-boned writing is familiar to the passing generation, wrote the greatest psychological study of drink when he told the story of his own life in *John Barleycorn*. With him "alcohol was an acquired taste." It had been painfully acquired. "Alcohol had been a dreadfully repulsive thing—more nauseous than any physic. I did not like the taste of it. I drank it only for its 'kick,' and from the age of five to that of twenty-five I had not learned to care for its kick. Twenty years of unwilling apprenticeship had been required to make my system rebelliously tolerant of alcohol; to make me, in the heart and deeps of me, desirous of alcohol." Why did this typical American boy and man wade through the revulsions of the alcohol adventure? He did it

[2] "Although some of the earlier workers on these lines believed they had found evidence of an initial stimulating effect of alcohol, this appeared in all cases to be of but small extent and duration and later work throws doubt upon the validity of this interpretation of the evidence and supports the conclusion that the direct effect of alcohol upon the nervous system is in all stages and upon all parts of the system to depress or suspend its functions; that it is, in short, from first to last a narcotic drug."—*Alcohol, Its Action on the Human Organism.* Medical Research Council, Central Control Board of the Liquor Traffic, Great Britain.

because "in the saloons life was different. Men talked with great voices, laughed great laughs, and there was an atmosphere of greatness." Life was lurid, blows were struck, blood shed. Men of weak muscles and weak minds felt themselves to be mighty men of valor; falsetto voices uttered defiance in tones which to their owners sounded as menacing roars. On the coast and at sea, over the trodden snow-trails of the Klondike, always, everywhere London's indulgence in alcohol was social in character until the day came when he *"wanted"* his daily predinner cocktail, wanted the bottle of whisky which sat by his typewriter when he sat down to work, and his narcotized brain refused to begin its daily task without a shot of alcohol. The drinking was no longer a social rite; the terrible time of white nights and blue days had come, nights when one of the greatest geniuses of our time slept handcuffed to John Barleycorn, worked only when John Barleycorn would let him work, and looked forward with ever-deepening despair to the hopeless end toward which John Barleycorn was leading him.

Everywhere today we have the social urge to drink, and we may very well acknowledge now that conformity is much easier than non-conformity. The suggestion is with us constantly in plays and motion-pictures, in novels and the fiction magazines, in advertising. The cocktail is a fad. We must make our choice. As civilized men and women we may bring all impulses, sensations, motives, and customs to judgment. The ability to do so under all social circumstances is the highest indication of culture and poise, and it is significant that the intolerant compulsion of the social custom is greater among those who are not sure of their social position, not sure of their own social worth.

The strongest motive of all today, however, is not psycho-physical or social, it is economic. Indeed, much of the social motive has its origin in the greed of the trade, which is making use of every device of trade promotion such as wide-spread suggestive advertising and display to make the use of drink a "fad." It is quite probable that three-fourths, possibly more, of the consumption of drink is directly due to the efforts of the liquor trade to increase dividends. The same thing holds true in regard to almost all other commodities. We use a great deal more soap because it is constantly advertised; we renew our wardrobes because of the fashion-shows and the window-displays of the shops. Few people realize the enormous size of the liquor industry. The drink consumed by the American people in the present year will cost them at retail not less than two billion five hundred million dollars, and the opportunities for profits are tremendous. Whisky can be made, aged, insured, and distributed for less than one dollar a gallon. It sells by the drink for perhaps thirty times as much, and of this retail cost the Federal Government, states and municipalities get in revenue hardly more than one dollar in six. It is the economic motive which is the support of the institution in all of its aspects. The newspapers which fill their pages with liquor advertising and with editorials against prohibition get scores of millions of "velvet" money from the trade. It is safe to say that if we could take from the traffic, legal and illegal, all of the profits it is deriving from promotion of the liquor appetite and its satisfaction we would remove a very great part of the problem, but the accomplishment of this involves peculiar difficulties because of the character of the commodity itself. These difficulties will be discussed in due time.

The Political Motive

Last but by no means least of the origins of the drink custom is the political motive, even more unworthy than the economic motive. This motive is noted in two characteristics of drink: (1) the habit-forming nature of the commodity, and (2) its socially indefensible status in society. In the words of Dr. Harold Miller:

> Man remembers, and once having found a short cut to his fool's paradise, he returns again and again. Thus alcohol forms a habit. And unwittingly this man's body in trying to protect itself delivers him into the hands of his adversary. When the short-circuiting of the nervous system is repeated, it strengthens its insulation. More of the narcotic must then be used to get results. Give a man beer and your market for whisky should be assured. This is a most important point for those who would profit by it.
>
> Nor have those who would profit overlooked it. Alcohol seems to have been made to order for their purpose. They have found it to be the perfect instrument for the exploitation of the people. For that purpose how could it be improved? Here is a commodity which does most of its own advertising and when once sold guarantees repeat orders. Once a customer always a customer. Moreover, he will buy it in increasing quantities as long as he lives. And he will pay for it even if he cannot pay for his groceries and his doctor. He will pay for it even if his family must go without bread, even if his wife must earn the money for it over the wash-tub. If liquor made men live forever the profit could not be improved, since with every minute a new drinker is born.
>
> The habituated drinker will give not only his shirt but also his vote. Which means, of course, unless you are blind and deaf and dumb, that in a democracy such as ours the men who furnish the liquor will elect the government. It follows, then, as the night the day, that entrenched behind the throne, they need not worry about you or me, or any three of us who do not happen to think that sort of deal a fair one. The economic and political exploitation of the people is accomplished.
>
> Exploitation is a big new word. Once upon a time they called that kind of control slavery. But slavery had certain drawbacks and could not survive in the face of competition. Slaves had to be bought and fed and cared for. To fix it so that the slave will give all of his money and all of his rights without asking any obligation from his master is a great improvement—for the master. Especially so when the master

gets the power to make the laws and makes therefore the kind which will maintain him as the master forever.

The effects of alcohol are drunkenness and death and exploitation, these three, and the greatest of these is exploitation.

The politics which preys upon the people finds its natural ally in the alcohol trade and it is in a position to compel alliance because the drink traffic has no natural right of existence; it lives only by privilege, by license. It must serve the politics which grants an unnatural right.

Let Us Summarize

1. Alcohol is not a stimulant; it is a narcotic. Its apparent stimulating effect is due to the narcotizing of the higher controls.

2. The alcohol habit is largely mental rather than physical. The old belief was that a man's stomach cried out for alcohol. The new knowledge informs us that it is a man's mind which points back to the lethal pleasures of the bowl and tells him that his nerves tingle for the intoxicating effects of alcohol.

3. It is a fallacy to think that depriving people of the opportunity to secure drink intensifies desire. Knowledge that alcohol can be no longer obtained would be a help to sobriety, as Prof. D. E. Partridge found in an investigation of men detained in hospitals and prisons. Even in the most confirmed cases the appetite wholly ceased as soon as the subject realized that alcohol could not possibly be obtained.

4. Alcohol causes criminality not because the drunken man "doesn't know what he is doing," but because he doesn't *care* what he is doing. The results of a million years of human progress can be wiped out by a single debauch, the brain centers and thought-association circuits being broken up so that the man becomes actually "decivilized."

5. The alcohol habit is not handed down from father to son. A drinker's children *may* inherit weakened bodies and nervous systems which are highly susceptible to alcohol or other drugs, but the actual craving is not inherited.

6. The drink custom is largely social. Intelligent, socially minded, cultured men and women may find stimulation and escape in social activities, in music and understanding of the arts, in athletics and recreation, and these resources do not have unfavorable after effects.

It is of the utmost significance that alcohol is an artificial product not found normally in nature. Processes of decay sometimes give rise to alcohol without man's aid, but this is comparatively rare. Probably long ages passed after man appeared on earth before he discovered the process of making alcohol and it is not reasonable to suppose that he came with an inherent inclination to use something which did not for him exist. Furthermore in the times when he knew little or nothing of controlling the forces of nature man was shaped to his environment rather than shaping his environment to himself.

Questions

Is your attitude toward the question of drink determined by:

(*a*) The study of the problem in its physiological, psychological and social aspects?
(*b*) The suggestion of your background and associations?
(*c*) By economic and semieconomic suggestions such as advertisements, fictional and dramatic content?

Do you consider the alcohol question principally:

(*a*) Physiological?
(*b*) Psychological?
(*c*) One of social organization?
(*d*) Spiritual; character and religion?

Does the moral breakdown so frequently resulting from the use of drink primarily come from:

(*a*) An abandonment of ideals?
(*b*) The influence of alcohol upon mental and nerve functioning?

What do you consider the most powerful motive for the drinking custom in modern life:

(*a*) Escape from monotony?
(*b*) From nervous strain?
(*c*) From poverty; economic and social insecurity?
(*d*) Stimulation to meet the demands of the business world, the demands of the social life?

The people of the United States spent last year more than $1,250,000,000 for tobacco; $890,000,000 for amusements; $515,000,000 for cosmetics; and for confectionery $220,000,000. Baptists are a great body, and so must have shared largely in these expenditures. Is it any wonder that the Lord's treasury has to suffer?

OUR NATION'S STRENGTH

By George W. Tuttle

Not in the mighty warship's strength, that travels the trackless sea;
Nor yet in its airplanes sailing like birds in the ether, free;
Not in submarines that lurk in innocent merchantman's path,
Nor yet in cannon huge, that hurl their tons of destroying wrath;
No, 'tis faith in the hearts of men that must make our nation strong;
To arm of God o'er arms of men will the victories belong.

Adult Class Projects

By GRACE M. CHAPIN, Princeville, Illinois

The first project of importance is of course the organization of the class. A name must be chosen, a policy adopted, a committee appointed to draw up a constitution, stipulating the number of officers and committees, with their respective responsibilities. The names of charter-members, with space for new members, will be listed.

Whenever the class makes public announcements of its activities the chosen name should be used. Such names as "Willing Workers," with the motto, "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister"; "The F. H. C. Class" (Faith, Hope and Charity), with "And now abideth faith, hope and charity; but the greatest of these is charity," as motto; "The Seekers," "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," motto; "The Lifters," "Bear ye one another's burdens," motto; "The F. F. Class" ("Faithful Followers"), "And they followed Jesus," motto, are suggested, as illustrations. A secretary's book, large enough to permit the entries of more than one year, should be provided. It will contain a copy of the constitution, the membership-roll, the minutes of business meetings, reports of social evenings, group pictures, newspaper-clippings regarding the class or church. It becomes a prized book. The treasurer, and each committee chairman, also, needs a note-book for records, so that a report can be given accurately and regularly. It is important for each chairman—and the teacher—to be on the lookout for all the special talents of the group, and to make notes thereof if the class is large.

Let the social committee make out an attractive program of social events for the year or season, a copy of which is furnished to each member of the class. Let the membership committee have lists of members with a definite territory for which each of the committee is to be responsible. Let the missionary committee present suitable missionary projects, and lead in carrying them out. Let the devotional committee plan—five-minute?—devotional periods for each Sunday, for the beginning or ending of the class-hour. Let the visiting committee send out messages of cheer, or sympathy, and make calls on the sick, or on the newcomers. To get everybody to work efficiently and interestedly is the "project" first in importance.

When the class organization is well under way, with all sails set, consider its relation and duty to the church school and the church. How show loyalty, devotion, usefulness? Possibly the parsonage needs new paper or paint, an additional cupboard, or some shrubbery or fruit-trees. Probably the church needs cleaning; a bit of varnish; roofing. Very likely the church school primary or junior department needs better pictures or models. Perhaps a nursery-room is needed, or new hymn-books.

The class next discusses the broader needs of the community. Is a public playground available? This is a big project, but worth while. There is no doubt an unfortunate group in town—needy families—for whom to make clothing, or to aid to better living conditions. Perhaps a community reading-room is a crying want. In a city the class can help some settlement-house in various ways. There is often a home for children, or old people, which needs comforts, curtains, blouses, or games.

Reaching beyond the community, find a place of service for both home and foreign missions. The class will promote with enthusiasm the annual school of missions, turning out in force. They will help raise the missionary budget, by food-sales, rummage-sales, programs of local talent. They will correspond with the denominational missionary headquarters for word as to the most crying needs. Perhaps the son or daughter of a foreign missionary is coming to this country to school, and needs a friend, or a home for the vacation. Possibly some home mission station needs books, magazines, pictures, blackboards. There are limitless possibilities in connection with missions.

One of the simplest and most effective projects is to form a class reading circle. There is so much published, which no teacher can fully present to the class, that is inspiring and instructive. Suppose the class numbers fifty. Divide into four groups. With a small contribution from each member and a little from the class treasury four fine books can be purchased. Each group will append a list of the names in that group and check off when read. It is important that each one keep the book only a week. At the end of the quarter a brief review of each book will be given by some one. Then the books will change groups, so that by the end of a year each member has read all four. One book might be a new devotional book, another on child-training, a third on religious education or religious psychology, a fourth a stimulating Christian biography. At the end of the year points from these books can be discussed in a lively general meeting, and so their value enhanced.

THE prophet Haggai speaks of the money that some of his people were putting into *bags with holes* (1:6). Money put in the treasury of Christ's work "stays put."

Pacificism in the Early Church

Tertullian (born A. D. 160) was one of the greatest of the church fathers. He is regarded as the founder of Latin Christian literature, and his *Apologeticum* is probably the most brilliant defence of the Christian faith ever written. Tertullian was asked whether a believer might enter military service, and if soldiers were to be admitted into the church. His reply was:

How will a Christian man war without a sword--which the Lord has taken away? In disarming Peter he (Jesus) unbelted every soldier. When Jesus said, "He who uses the sword shall perish by the sword," he made it unlawful for a Christian to use the sword at all; if a Christian cannot go to law, much less can he, as a son of peace, go to battle; if he is not allowed to avenge injuries done to himself, he cannot consistently take part in imprisoning or torturing or punishing his fellow creatures.

John's Vision on Patmos

(*Concluded from page 356*)

must pass the vision on to others. The problem of Pentecost was how to get the secret of Christ into the street; the problem of the Mount of Transfiguration was how to make it practical and effective at the foot of the mountain; John's problem, in the apocalyptic vision, is set forth in the words, "Write the things which thou has seen."

THE more generously I give to the Lord, through his church, the more largely will he have my heart's affection (Luke 12:34). It is not right for me to sing "More love, O Christ to thee!" unless I am willing to give, and give, and give.

THE ORGANIZED CLASS

The Dorcas Class of the Baptist Church, Worthington, Indiana

This class was organized in 1928 with Mrs. C. B. Sexson as teacher. It is with pride that the class has retained Mrs. Sexson as teacher even until the present time. The Dorcas Class has been a successful organization. They cooperate to reach a given goal, forgetful of individual preferences. The entire church re-

The Woman's Bible Class, First Baptist Church, Denver, Colo.

spects these women. During these seven years they have sponsored some major projects: have earned around six hundred dollars for the upbuilding of the kingdom; have helped in remodeling our building, clearing away indebtedness, and each year have made a substantial pledge to the pastor's salary. There are now forty-nine members enrolled, with an average attendance of twenty-four during the past two years. On the first Thursday of each month the class has a party, usually a covered-dish affair. After the repast the business session is held. Following this the meeting is given over to an entertainment committee that really entertains. At the December meeting slips with the name and birth month are drawn. During the following year each member receives at the regular meeting a birthday gift from the one who has thus become her "birthday sister." The spiritual note is sounded in consistent Bible-reading. During the past year this class has averaged sixty-three chapters per week. Fifteen members read at least five books on the missionary reading list. The present officers are: president, Mrs. Harve Ingalls; vice-president, Mrs. W. H. Roeschlein; secretary-treasurer, Mrs. Howard Kiser.

The Woman's Bible Class of the First Baptist Church, Denver, Colorado

Nearly everyone goes to Denver. The word that the women of this class sent with the photograph—it reached Philadelphia in August!—is: "In this picture we are saying to you, 'Come and visit our class when vacationing in cool Colorado.'" The teacher is Mrs. Gertrude Taylor Stoltz. She is tenth, left to right, standing. Mrs. Leona De Bell, the class president, stands on her right. The membership is about sixty, of the whole school, about six hundred.

Philomatheon Class, First Baptist Church, Oakland, Calif.

Rev. C. C. Rickman, teacher (center, holding Bible). At his right, Rev. F. S. Lawrence; at his left, S. P. Meads, former teachers.

The Superintendent as an Educator

The superintendent, as an educator, must be a constant student. He will need to have at hand as "tools of his trade" a valuable library. The best books and periodicals on Christian religious education will be his constant companions. If he cannot afford to purchase these and his church cannot do so either, he should avail himself of the local pubilc library or the circulating library of his own church board of Christian education. There is no excuse for ignorance in these days of opportunity. The superintendent who desires to be informed and to become a real leader will make the opportunity for this self-improvement. With all of the knowledge that he must acquire, if he is to give the best service and leadership, he must seek to remain a humble servant of the lowly Nazarene and the church he would serve.—*Russell M. Bytheswood, in "The Bethany Church School Guide."*

RECENT BOOKS

Order All Books from The American Baptist Publication Society

Legacy of a Christian Mind: John M'Leod Campbell. By Eugene Garrett Bewkes. The Judson Press.

Campbell is regarded as the greatest of all Scottish theologians. The late Prof. H. R. Mackintosh said of him: "To whom perhaps, more than to any other single mind, we today owe a spiritual interpretation of the central Christian ideas." Strangely enough, there has hitherto been no published biography of him, or adequate interpretation of his teachings. This lack Professor Bewkes, director of the School of Philosophy and Religion of Colgate University, has now supplied. It is the result of thorough investigation—the author is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh—but eminently readable, especially since the subject was such an interesting and unique figure. Part One is entitled "The Row Parish Period, 1825-1831; Part Two, "The Theologian of Later Years"; and Part Three, "The Nature of the Atonement."

Just One More Story: Six-Minute Talks for Boys and Girls. By John Edward Charlton. Fleming H. Revell Company. 128 pages. Price, $1.25.

This is the third volume of similar stories that Mr. Charlton has put out. They were evidently originally used as sermonettes, but are rather too short—and original—for other preachers to reproduce. "Each story has been written to meet some need which a boy or girl has voiced. There are stories "For Many Occasions," "Birds and Others," "Help from Many Sources," and "Christmas and Other Seasons." They are religious in a sensible sense, but not "preachy."

The Passing of John Broadbanks. By F. W. Boreham. The Abingdon Press. 276 pages. Price, $1.75.

We keep wondering how this Australian-Tasmanian Baptist preacher can do it, put out volume after volume—this is the thirty-first—of these bright, inspiring, popular sermon-essays. In a foreword he intimates that this is the last of these books, but one doubts it. Here, as in the others, the commonplace is made to speak delightfully, wisely and helpfully. Boreham has lost none of his old-time cunning in framing chapter titles for example, here: "My Scallop-Shell of Quiet"; "The Guild of Rebels"; "Switching on the Sunshine."

Gospel Light: Comments on the Teaching of Jesus from Aramaic and Unchanged Eastern Customs. By George M. Lamsa. A. J. Holman Company. 401 pages. Price, $2.75.

In Adult Leader for July, 1934, we reviewed Mr. Lamsa's *The Gospels According to the Eastern Version,* suggesting that the value of that book was exaggerated, if not misrepresented, by both author and publisher, and calling attention to the fact that Lamsa's scholarship is called in question by most biblical scholars. This is a much better book. The author knows a lot about the Bible lands of today and gives many illuminating hints in understanding the Gospels; in brief page and half-page chapters referring to selected passages. Sometimes he is fanciful—too ingenious; and one must use care and discrimination in using the book.

The Church Through Half a Century: Essays in Honor of William Adams Brown. By Former Students. Scribner's. 425 pages. Price, $3.00.

Doctor Brown began to teach at Union Theological Seminary in 1892; he had graduated there two years before; his father, William Adams, had been its president, and his father, John Crosby Brown, was president of its board of trustees. At the June, 1936, commencement he retired, and at that time this volume was presented to him. It was a splendid honoring, and well-deserved, for in these almost fifty years of connection with Union, Doctor Brown has brought it great repute. He has not only taught his classes, but has written dozens of scholarly books that have had a wide reading, and addressed and worked with innumerable conferences for world betterment. His most notable accomplishment has perhaps been to stand strongly for a spiritual interpretation of life, and for spirituality in philosophy and theology, against humanism, materialism, and theological looseness. While there are a couple of personal chapters among the eighteen, as an introduction, the book is made up of solid, well-prepared material of permanent value.

Harry P. Van Dusen writes on "The Liberal Movement in Theology"; Walter M. Horton on "Science and Theology"; H. Emil Brunner on "Continental European Theology"; Charles W. Gilkey on "Protestant Preaching"; Samuel McCrea Cavert on "Christian Unity in America."

African Bridge Builders. Edited by William C. Bell. Friendship Press. 1936. 168 pages. Price, cloth, $1.00; paper, 60 cents.

A collection of stories that have come out of Africa, selected from a series called "Little Books for Africa," intended for use in English-speaking schools in Africa. This book will give readers a better understanding of Africa and African life. It is planned particularly for teen-age readers and is a Junior World Wide Guild study-book.

Keeping Our Balance. By Eva Taylor. Cokesbury Press. 1936. 80 pages. Price, paper, 25 cents.

A readable non-technical pamphlet on alcohol education suitable for the reading-table in a junior or intermediate department. Good source material to use in connection with a temperance unit.

Primary Missionary Stories. By Grace W. McGavran. United Christian Missionary Society. 1936. 41 pages. Price, $2.50.

Twelve brief but well-told stories that take us traveling around the globe. Primary teachers and superintendents will find this little pamphlet useful on those many occasions when a missionary story is needed.

The Story of the American Negro. By Ina Corinne Brown. Friendship Press. 1936. 208 pages. Price, cloth, $1.00; paper, 60 cents.

The author describes this book in the foreword as follows: "This book is not another study of the race problem as such; it is rather a simple chronological story of the Negro as the chief figure in one of the most dramatic migrations and adjustments made by any people in human history." The book is prepared primarily as a study-book for young people's and adult groups, but its thoughtful presentation of the problems and achievements of the Negro in America will commend it to every fair-minded person.

Living Stone. By Alma N. Schilling and A. J. William Myers. Introduction by Harry Emerson Fosdick. The Bethany Press. 1936. 191 pages. Price, $1.50.

Long before the construction of the magnificent Riverside Church, in New York City, the boys and girls of the old Park Avenue Church began planning for the new church home. They became acquainted with architects, stained-glass artists, sculptors, builders, janitors; all who had some part in the building of the new church. *Living Stone* is a record of the adventures and explorations of these boys and girls, and shows the educational value of their various experiences. As an account of a project in creative education it is full of suggestions for other teachers.

Educating Children for Peace. By Imogene M. McPherson. The Abingdon Press. 1936. 190 pages. Price, $2.00.

This book sets forth experiences with children in peace education in vacation church schools in the New York City area. It describes the training of the teachers for the work and the resulting units developed in the schools. The emphasis is upon the joys and satisfactions of peace rather than on the horrors of war; but the fundamental causes and effects of war are discussed by the children. Included in the book are units for children of primary, junior and intermediate ages, with handwork, dramatic and other creative enterprises described in a way as to make the material of value for any leader attempting to further peace education. The author is acting educational director of the Metropolitan Federation of Daily Vacation Bible Schools.

Helping Juniors Meet the Problem of Alcohol. By Edith Kent Battle. Cokesbury Press. 1936. 40 pages. Price, paper, 20 cents.

A teaching unit of six or more sessions, giving suggestions for worship, Scripture, exploration, activities and other enterprises.

We Sing America. By Marion Cuthbert. Friendship Press. 1936. 117 pages. Price, cloth, $1.00; paper, 50 cents.

A book of stories and facts about American Negroes, prepared for juniors, which will help young readers to appreciate not only the contributions Negroes make to our national life, but the difficult problems they must face as well. Good for the junior library.

Lesson Topics for January

January 3. The Son of God Becomes Man. John 1:1-51.
January 10. New Life in Christ. John 2:1 to 3:36.
January 17. Jesus the Water of Life. John 4:1-54.
January 24. Two Miracles of Mercy. John 5:1 to 6:71.
January 31. The Financial Cost of Alcoholic Beverages. Prov. 21:17; 23:20, 21; Matt. 24:45-51; John 6:26, 27, 35.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES
FOURTH QUARTER, 1936: THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY

(Second Half of a Six-Months' Course—Studies in The Acts, The Epistles, and The Revelation)

AIM. To lead the student to an understanding of New Testament Christianity, and to beget in him the desire and purpose to live the Christian life and to win others to faith in the Lord Jesus

These lessons are developed from outlines prepared by the Committee on Improved Uniform Lessons of the International Council. The outlines are copyrighted, 1934, by the International Council of Religious Education and are used by permission

LESSON X. DECEMBER 6. TRANSMITTING THE GOSPEL HERITAGE

1 Tim. 6; 2 Tim. 4; Titus 2. (Verses printed, 1 Tim. 6: 6-16; 2 Tim. 4: 16-18.)

GENERAL THEME: PAUL'S PARTING COUNSELS

Prepared by MITCHELL BRONK, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Psalm 121

KEY VERSE: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.—2 Tim. 4: 7

1 Timothy 6: 6-16

6 But godliness with contentment is reat gain.
7 For we brought nothing into this vorld, and it is certain we can carry othing out.
8 And having food and raiment let us e therewith content.
9 But they that will be rich fall into emptation and a snare, and into many oolish and hurtful lusts, which drown ien in destruction and perdition.
10 For the love of money is the root f all evil: which while some coveted fter, they have erred from the faith, and ierced themselves through with many orrows.
11 But thou, O man of God, flee these iings; and follow after righteousness, odliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.
12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay old on eternal life, whereunto thou art lso called, and hast professed a good rofession before many witnesses.
13 I give thee charge in the sight of od, who quickeneth all things, and be- ore Christ Jesus, who before Pontius ilate witnessed a good confession;
14 That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:
15 Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords;
16 Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.

2 Timothy 4: 16-18

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.
17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.
18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Goals of a Good Life. 1 im. 6: 6-16. Paul was always not only eaching out, striving, for opportunities -for Christ—but it was for big opportunities. Have not even little goals of hristian service an attraction for you?

Tuesday. The Lord Delivers. 2 Tim. : 16-18. The unseen Christ may be very ose to you, but he comes still closer in ood Christian friends—in times of lonelness and dependence.

Wednesday. Faithful to the End. 2 im. 4: 3-8. Paul had been thoroughly nverted; was a thorough Christian; a ing-through-to-the-end Christian. For thorough" and "through" are the same ord.

Thursday. Moses Counsels Courage. Deut. 31: 1-8. Moses knew—that God does not fail his faithful (ver. 6). Paul knew it. Men who have had long experience with God always know it.

Friday. "We will serve the Lord." Joshua 24: 14-18. The "therefore" of verse 18 may well be italicized. If you are any kind of a Christian there are lots of "therefores" in your experience; lots of reasons why you should say, "Therefore I also will serve the Lord."

Saturday. The Promised Land. John 14: 1-4. When the King James version was made "mansion" meant simply "dwelling"; it could be applied to a cottage. I like to think of where I am going to be not as a mansion, but as a cozier place. (Mrs. Montgomery has, "In my Father's house there are many rooms.")

Sunday. The Lord Our Keeper. Psalm 121. The Bible is the Book of the Ages. It tells of an age-long God. Back there with Abraham, with Paul, and now with me, "keeping watch above his own"!

At the Threshold of the Lesson

Our lessons of the past six months have brought the great herald of the cross finally to Rome. In his earlier planning to visit Italy (Rom. 1: 10-13; 15: 22, 23) Paul had mentioned Spain, the Tarshish of the Old Testament, as another prospective field of his missionary activity (Rom. 15: 24). Did he ever reach that country?

The matter of Paul's reaching Spain is bound up with the time and place of the writing of Second Timothy. The apostle appears to have been then a prisoner at Rome, but at a later time than that indicated by the close of Acts. He had had one trial, or examination (4: 16) and has little hope of deliverance, is convinced that the end is near (4: 6, 7).

The letters to Timothy take for granted a more advanced stage of church development than that presented in Acts and the earlier epistles. Traditions were current in the early church that Paul did preach in Spain; though the most reliable of them, that given by Clement, is indefinite. He says that the apostle "went to the extreme limit of the west."

If Paul did preach beyond Rome, in Spain, Gaul, or even Britain—this is sometimes claimed—then why have we no account of it? Why does Acts stop where it does? Well, the purpose of Scripture has been fulfilled—in apostolic church history: to show Christians of every age how the first disciples, especially the foremost of them, lived and worked.

The Lesson Before Us

I. TIMOTHY AND THE EPISTLES

The two letters with the one to Titus are spoken of as "the pastoral epistles." Like Philemon they are personal, but

unlike it, they are concerned with church work. "My own son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2) and "my dearly beloved son" (2 Tim. 1:2) tell us adequately about the apostle's regard for this notable fellow laborer of his (cp. also 1 Cor. 4:17). He and Luke were evidently Paul's closest friends.

It is assumed that Timothy and his mother were converted during Paul's first visit to their home town, Lystra. On the second visit he joins the apostle's little evangelistic band (Acts 16:3). There are other informative references to Timothy in 1 Thess. 3:1-6; 2 Cor. 1:19; Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10ff.; 2 Cor. 7:6; 12:18; Rom. 16:21; Acts 20:4ff.; Phil. 2:19, and Heb. 13:23.

When the two letters were written Timothy was at Ephesus. We are not to think of him as bishop, or head, of the church there, but rather as Paul's representative on that important field. Those mission churches were constantly being preyed upon by false teachers and needed much looking after (1 Tim. 1:3,4; 6:3). The advice as to bishops and deacons (1 Tim 3:1ff.) is for Timothy's guidance in appointing, or regulating the appointment of, such church officials. It should be repeated that the office of bishop, as we know it, did not at this time prevail; the word might better be translated "overseer," or "superintendent" (Goodspeed).

II. Parting Instructions

Paul is handing over his work to his associates—fellow workers—chief among whom is Timothy. The fact gives a tone of sadness to these letters (2 Tim. 4:5, 6). Strikingly, there is more emphasis upon organization and church machinery than we find in Paul's earlier letters and addresses. He has not ceased inordinately to value reliance upon the Spirit, but he realizes that the ever-growing church must be orderly conducted.

In old English wills it was customary for the testator both to assert his faith in God and to defend his life's record. Paul does that here. He has never been ashamed of the gospel, nor is he now ashamed of the service he has rendered it. "It's a blazing torch that he hands on to the younger herald!" He had claimed to the Ephesian elders to have been an example to them (Acts 20:33-35); he tacitly points Timothy to his career for Christ as not unworthy of imitation. The words do not sound at all like a boast—a shout of victory, rather (2 Tim. 4:7). He is sure of his crown.

In 1 Timothy 6:6-16 we may think of the apostle as setting down a philosophy of life that he himself has tested through the years; a philosophy of contentment. He has lacked riches, has lacked most "things," but is now, at his life's close, all the better for that. There is warning here. The "young Timothy" is an exceptionally good Christian, but nevertheless he should be on his guard—against wanting too many "things," and too much money (ver. 10). Moral safety and spiritual victory come from chasing after "integrity, piety, faith, love, stedfastness" (ver. 11, Mrs. Montgomery).

"Fight," in verse 12, rather obscures Paul's figure of speech, which has an athletic rather than a military reference. He says, "Contend splendidly in the contest of faith; stretching out toward, to lay hold upon, the goal of eternal life." Because the apostle knows that he is about at the end of his course, and because he honestly knows that he has run well—boxed well, wrestled well—the picture of a contestant in the games is much in his thought (cf. 2 Tim. 4:7).

"What will that Face of splendor be
When at the goal He welcomes thee?"

Perhaps because he himself is, Paul feels that the world is growing old; and so, the Lord's Appearing! (Ver. 14.) Timothy the younger man may even witness it—but, "in his time"—"in God's good time" (Mrs. Montgomery). Verses 15 and 16 were by the early church made into a rhythmic doxology.

III. Need of His Friends

The closing paragraphs of the Second Epistle (ver. 11-22) *present a darker picture of Paul at Rome.* Tradition reports that he was now confined in a damp, dark prison. Friends counted for a lot with Paul. He is lonesome. The faithful, beloved Luke is there, but most of the others are off on missions; and many besides Demas will have deserted. He longs for the companionship of Timothy—and John Mark, whom he had come to know better than he did back there at Perga (Acts 13:13; 15:37-39), and to love. He wants them both to come to him, as soon as they can.

A heavy traveling-cloak, pænula, that one of the Troas disciples was keeping for him, *Timothy is to fetch,* when his vessel touches at that port; and some "books" that he had left either there or at Ephesus (ver. 13). The most of them would be papyrus manuscripts, but a prized few were of vellum. Bible readers have kept wondering what writings they were: Some of the Greek classics, perhaps; portions of the Hebrew Scriptures; certainly sheets where Christians had noted down sayings of Jesus and memorabilia of his life. We have so little said about Paul's more intimate life that this reference—side-light—is most interesting.

We can only conjecture what the evil was that Alexander (ver. 14) *did Paul,* or whether he is to be identified with either of the Alexanders of 1 Timothy 1:20 and Acts 19:33, 34. Farrar suggests that he was the man who instigated Paul's rearrest, and that this took place at Troas; possibly Ephesus. Others think that he was there at Rome and that Paul is telling Timothy to be on his guard against him when he arrives. Notice the warnings, or rather cautions, that the apostle throws out here and there in the letters. He has the utmost confidence in Timothy; still, let him watch out. (Cp. 1 Cor. 10:12.)

In verse 16 he may be referring to his rearrest—if there was a second imprisonment. Goodspeed has, "At my first appearance in court." If no man was there to be his advocate, the Lord was for the Saviour who appeared to him outside Damascus never went away. This experience, too, is one of the things that Christians learn of Paul.

"Lion" (ver. 17) may mean emperor or empire, or the actual lions used to immolate Christians in the amphitheater or the powers of darkness of this world that were ever chasing him (Ps. 22:21).

The finest note in this whole valedictory is the apostle's insistent thought of the gospel's furtherance. In his loneliness, in the discomfort of his jail, before his accusers, facing the lion—whatever it was—his chief concern and anxiety is that his end may witness for Christ, as his life had been doing—"that all the Gentiles might hear" (ver. 17).

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ Which of Paul's instructions in these two letters to Timothy are most applicable to a Sunday school teacher?

¶ What was the particular experience that made Paul such an energetic missionary?

¶ What must always be the great missionary motive?

¶ Characterize the faith that drives a church or an individual Christian out into "all the world" to attempt to win it for Christ.

¶ Mention other great Christians who have come to the end of life with similar victorious faith.

¶ Do you know the value of such letter writing as Paul's? Do you ever write letters—in particular, to young people—giving them sensible good advice and Christian counsel and encouragement?

¶ What about Christ's need of friends in his earthly life, and now?

Notes and Comment

Titus was of Gentile birth and one of Paul's own converts ("mine own son," Titus 4). Paul refused to have him circumcised (Gal. 2:3-5). He was with the apostle in many of his trials and missionary tours (2 Cor. 8:6, 16, 23), and was entrusted with several important commissions (2 Cor. 12:18; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus 1:2). The epistle was designed to instruct Titus in the discharge of his ministerial offices in Crete, a difficult field owing to the character of the natives, who were noted for lying, idleness and gluttony (1:12).

The portions of Acts that we have been udying give us at least a hint of the ide sweep of Paul's missionary interest. o disciple of Jesus has ever been more ithful to the Master's "Go ye into all e world and preach!" (Mark 16:15.) ere we have Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25), rete (Titus 1:5), Ephesus (where Timhy was working), Rome and even the estern end of the Great Sea (Rom. 15:2-24). One notices in this period of aul's life a conflict, or pulling, of inrests: he would be back among his der missions, "strengthening," "comorting" ("pastoral work"), but the ast areas of heathendom lure him 'evangelism") both important and ecessary; the church's double task!

"*So if we have food and shelter,* let be content with that" (1 Tim. 6:8, rs. Montgomery). "Whatever else ay be granted may be received with anks; it may be useful and add comrt."—*C. R. Erdman.*

"*Measure thy life* by loss instead of gain;
Not by the wine drunk, but the wine poured forth;
For love's strength standeth in love's sacrifice;
And he who suffers most hath most to gain."

It is in God's plan that the world shall be Christian; it was in his plan that Europe should be. He set down two foci: Jerusalem with its cross; Rome with its little group of folks who had been won to that cross during a Passover visit in the Judean city, reenforced by a missionary in chains. Now it is a sad fact that Christianity hasn't been anywhere near so faithful, energetic, in spreading the gospel from the universal focus, Jerusalem (ours), as Rome was in converting Europe. A half-dozen centuries saw that task nominally completed. Ours?

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman,[1] Columbus, Ohio

PAUL'S PARTING COUNSELS

How do you picture Timothy? He as serving in an important capacity, perintending the work of the Christian urch in Ephesus. Sanders and Kent, *Messages of the Bible,* say:

"The picture which the Pastoral letters int of Timothy is that of a devoted d sincere man who, however, appears mewhat lacking in firmness and cour-ge. He seems to have shrunk from reonsibility and to have been much disuraged by the perplexities and trials his position. He is represented as ing in danger not only of allowing ose committed to his charge to be led tray, but even of coming himself under e baleful influence of false teaching. erhaps he was one of those men who n work more successfully under the rection of another than when left to mself."

Judging from the miscellany of coments, suggestions and instructions given the chapters of First Timothy, the ader comes to the conclusion that mothy had a job on his hands. The perplexities and trials of his position" e readily discernible. Paul is writing t so much about doctrine as about the actical questions that confront the ung pastor. "Practical" questions are ways bothersome. It is comparatively sy to fashion theory. Doctrinal quesons yield to words properly assorted. dividual acts in a social order cannot ignored.

Shall women conduct public worship services? That question is an early appearance of the problem (?) of the place of women in our social pattern. Is the practice of asceticism compatible with a full Christian life? Are you aware, Timothy, of the danger of overemphasis upon the physical as contrasted with the spiritual? What are you doing, Timothy, about widows in destitute circumstances? The question of water alone, or of water supplemented by wine, must be faced. The relentless pursuit of money, Timothy, is causing no end of trouble. Be on the outlook for false teachings; and take special care that you, yourself, do not get mixed up with them. Do not rationalize error.

To Titus, likewise, go directions upon practical matters. Titus was doing in Crete what Timothy was doing in Ephesus. "You must remember, Titus," says Paul, "that the selection of church officials is of extreme importance—selection on the basis of exemplary behavior. Family life should be orderly and above reproach. Slaves who become Christian must be faithful to their owners who also are Christians. While the Romans are in power, Christians of Crete must be law-abiding. Factional disputes in the church are entirely out of order—keep them down, Titus."

The Christian life is not easy—this sums up much of the parting counsel of Paul to Timothy and Titus. In some respects it is like a soldier's life; that is, it will be a fight, and the soldier must do no "soldiering." In some ways it is like an athlete's life; that is, he must train, and abide by the rules of the game. Keeping the faith has obligations that involve sacrifice, struggle.

To the golf-enthusiast: I wish for you an occasional "birdie," and some success in your struggle for par for the course, but after all life is something more than a golf game. Shove golf into its proper place in the scheme of things.

To the football fan (this is hard for me to take, for I am devoted to the game): Admitting that the game does something for player and spectator, take care that it perverts no real values and does not crowd study and enthusiasm for righteousness into a corner.

To the bookworm: Stimulate your imagination with fiction, and relax with a detective story now and then, but do not forget that solidity and improvement of the mind involve a long process.

What must we do, then? Well, Paul says that he fought a fight, ran a race, kept the faith. Christianity must needs be a vocation rather than an avocation. Our faith must pulse through life. That is what Paul seems to declare, as I see it.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

PAUL'S PARTING COUNSELS

In a proud city ruled by a cruel emperor there lay, in one of its prisons, an old—not so much in years as in experience—minister-missionary. He was a much-traveled man. He had seen people in all walks of life, in Asia and Europe, on land and on sea. He had been acclaimed as a god, and he had been run out of cities as a heretic. He had had an extraordinarily active and useful life. He had helped many people and had founded churches that would continue to help many others. Now he is nearing the end and in jail is thinking it over.

Fragments from three letters to two of his friends—likewise ministers—which we have for our lesson today give us some of his reflections on the things in his world that he saw that were contrary to the religion of Christ; what there is in life that made it worth living; and what, after all, is the true motive of life.

Though these words were written primarily for ministers, they are appropriate to all. Let us not evade responsibility of their fitness for us by saying they refer only to the clergy. Paul's swan song, both in its theme and in its finale, belongs to the ages, to all people, not to a selected group. In days like these when men and women in their confusion over the many different doctrines that are proclaimed hardly know what to believe, it is well to listen to a man of large experience with God and with the problems of his time. After all, the problems of living are not so different from one age to the next as we sometimes think. They wear a different dress, and we mistake them for new creations, but after the newness has worn off we see the same old traits of human nature—or personality, if you will—asserting themselves.

[1] Professor Stillman is director of the hool of Social Administration in Ohio State iversity. He is the author of *Social Work blicity.*

In these days there is much talk about the "profit motive." It is interesting to find that Paul met that very thing in his day (1 Tim. 6:3-10. We think the charge that capitalism is tied up with religion, particularly our Protestant form, is very modern. Paul told Timothy that even in his time there were some men who thought "godliness is a way of gain (or profit)." That some men talked about their church connections as if the main object was whether it helped their business or not. This is all wrong, said the great preacher to his young successor. It is not Christ's teaching and it breeds envy, strife and various other wrong ideas; and it has a bad effect generally in the lives of those who think and talk and live that way.

Then he adds an interesting idea, using nearly the same words. Godliness is not a way of gain (or profit), but godliness with contentment is great gain (or profit). In the first place Paul is speaking of material riches, and in the second of wealth of personality. Putting too much effort into getting money and the things which money will buy destroys contentment. Having too much brings with it needless worries and cares. It reminds us of the rich man Jesus spoke of, who had to build greater barns to house the wealth he was hoarding.

It is right for Christians and others to have enough food and shelter and reasonable comforts of life. God has made provision enough so that all might have enough, if men were not so sinfully selfish as to want more than they can use, and to try to keep the surplus from those who could make good use of it.

True riches are those of the higher life. "Flee these *things*" and follow after the more important graces of righteousness, godliness, faith, love, meekness and patience. Dr. L. O. Hartman comments that life is more largely an "inside" than it is an "outside" affair, and that to a greater extent than most of us dream we are actually creating the world in which we live.

Again, Paul urges Timothy to be true to his religious beliefs (1 Tim. 6:12-16), and to teach others their stewardship responsibilities (17-19). Our religion must both be practised and shared. Dr. William Axling says: "From the standpoint of Christian occupation, Japan's cities contain two neglected classes. In the social scale they stand at opposite poles, the so-called lower and upper classes. In the church's program of advance one is as much neglected as the other. . . The lower classes, because of their constant fight with man's four major foes—poverty, disease, ignorance and vice—make a strong appeal to the followers of the Nazarene. Yet the foes which beset the members of the upper class—ease, luxurious living, selfishness and loose morals—are just as vicious and damning. The one needs Christ as much as the other. The church, if she is true to her Lord, knows no class distinction."[1] This holds true for the church in America as well as the church in Japan.

Paul's interest in persons as well as principles is clearly shown in 2 Timothy 4:9-21, when he refers to different ones who had aided or withstood him. His mention of otherwise unknown Christians reminds us how much the church owes to the every-day fidelity of ordinary, unknown Christian people. He gives us a glimpse of his confident faith in verse 17, when he asserts that even though his human friends deserted him, the Lord stood by him.

In the letter to Titus (chapter 2) Paul writes in a similar vein as to Timothy, but adds the motive that should control all Christians. (Ver. 11-14): We should live a "God-controlled life," because Christ came to earth to show us how, gave up his life to tell us how much God loves us, and because some day we shall see him. This gospel, like Christ, is the same yesterday and forever, and can be passed on with confidence to the future generations, knowing that it is truth which lasts as long as life itself. In the struggle to keep the best life and the best in life uppermost, this motive excels all others.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

How Polycarp Kept the Faith

Fight the good fight of faith (1 Tim. 6:12).

A hundred years after the time of the events we are now studying, in the city of Smyrna, like Ephesus one of the cities of the Province of Asia, an immense and madly excited crowd was assembled in the stadium, or circus. Before them stood a venerable man, Polycarp, a Christian bishop. He had been kept in hiding several days by his friends, for they knew his life was in danger, but had finally been discovered and brought before the maddened throng. The proconsul urged him to revile Christ and his life should be spared. "Eighty and six years have I served him," Polycarp calmly answered, "and how can I revile my King and my Saviour?" Above the tumult of the throng the words were shouted, "This was the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the puller down of our gods, who teacheth numbers not to sacrifice nor worship." The crowd demanded that he be burned alive, and Polycarp perished in the flames. —*Selected.*

Love Unites

A good foundation against the time to come (1 Tim. 6:19).

"They were building a great bridge across a river," wrote Amos R. Wells, in the *Christian Endeavor World,* "and the structure was carried from both sides to meet the middle. But some way, when the central span was swu into place, they found that it did not fi it fell short by two inches, and n ingenuity could bridge that little spac In dismay they telegraphed to the de signer of the bridge, and in great impa tience awaited his reply. When th reply came it was enigmatical, for merely said: 'Wait till tomorrow noo Tomorrow noon the mystified beholde found that the sun's rays had expande the metal so that, section to section, precisely matched, and there was n crack at all, the bridge was one. S the power of the Sun of Righteousne solves hard problems."

[1] *Book of Remembrance* for 1936.

The Death of Saint Paul

I have fought a good fight, I ha finished my course, I have kept the fai (2 Tim. 4:7, 8).

"How did he die, Marcus,
Whom thou call'st 'that poor old Je
As he knelt at the Aqua Salvæ,
The sport of the rabble crew?
How did he die, that Paulus,
That man of hated race?"
"Like a soldier falling in battle,
With sunshine on his face.

"He was old and worn and broken
As we left the city gate,
But at each step he seemed to grow
Stronger and more elate.
And as we passed from the city
Along the Ostian Road,
Men stopped and gazed in wonder,
His face so strangely glowed.

"Am I, too, then a Christian?
A voice within me cries;
'The God of Paulus is thy God,
On him thy soul relies.'
When my end will come I know not,
But come whene'er it may,
May I but stand and play the man
Like him who died today."

—*Author unknown*

Fellowship with the Master

The Lord stood with me and streng ened me (2 Tim. 4:17).

One day I asked a young fell "Don't you get lonesome on this lo drive?" He was conducting a po weak little country Sunday school miles back in the woods, having to dr over about the worst road I ever sa a journey requiring three hours ea way under best conditions. He had tr in vain to get somebody to go along w him to help in the work, and occupy vacant seat in the buggy, but there w various excuses, and he went alo "No," he said, "I thought at first would be, but when I go by myself seems that the Lord occupies the em seat beside me, and oh! we do have so great times together." And I could lieve it, for truly his was a good face look upon, and its joy was contagio —*Source unknown.*

Lesson XI. December 13. THE LIVING CHRIST AMONG THE CHURCHES

Rev. 1:1 to 3:22. (Verses printed, 1:4-18.)

General Theme: JOHN'S VISION ON PATMOS

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: 1 Corinthians 15:35-44

KEY VERSE: Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth.—Rev. 1:17, 18

4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia: unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. Seeing the Glorified Jesus. Rev. 1:9-18. That he is the Living One—for evermore—is grounded, notice, in "I . . . was dead." Thus also he gained the keys of—possession of—death and Hades.

Tuesday. The Ascension. Acts 1:6-11. A merely ethical, unvital Christianity restricts the uplift of Jesus to the higher planes of the good life; but the cross and the ascension say, "Higher than that!"

Wednesday. Stephen's Vision. Acts 7:54-60. It's a fine thing so to live—as Stephen had—and so to die—as he did—that at the last moment we may see in faith's vision the welcoming Lord.

Thursday. The Exalted Christ. Phil. 2:5-11. In his ladder vision Jacob saw the angels *ascending* and *descending.* Prophetic of the gospel; Christ Jesus coming down very humbly into human life, but towering o'er the wrecks of time on the cross, exalted at the right hand of God—carrying his brotherhood with him.

Friday. The River of Life. Rev. 22:1-5. A river—that is the gospel; always moving; everywhere out into the world; the spiritual servant of humanity; bearing souls to the farther shore, the homeland with God.

Saturday. The New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:1-5. We Christians associate Jerusalem with a dead past; with ruin and wreckage—that Zionism will improbably restore. Our Jerusalem is the "New" one; of the spirit, and not of geography; here, there, everywhere, now; and the destiny of the saints.

Sunday. "Man's Fairest Hope." 1 Cor. 15:35-44. In Christ Jesus even God could give us only an image of the actual heavenly. So the symbols and figurative language of Revelation are far, far short of "the real glory which shall be revealed to usward" (Rom. 8:18).

At the Threshold of the Lesson

This word "Revelation" in the Greek original is "Apocalypse." Apocalyptic writings were very common in Jewish religious literature, especially in the period 250 B. C.—A. D. 150. It is an unveiling (revelation) of divine mysteries, in figurative, symbolical language, and usually with eschatological predictions. The Old Testament book of Daniel is a typical apocalypse. Such writings were sometimes used when it would have been dangerous openly to set down the facts or truths. In considering an apocalyptic writing we are to stress both its mystery and its revealing. This complicates its study and understanding, as many Bible readers have found out in the case of Revelation. It has a precious message—for the initiated; its meaning is clear—just under the surface!

Apocalypses were frequently resorted to in times of religious persecution and distress, to comfort and inspirit the faithful. Thus John's banishment and vision are assigned to the reign of Domitian; say, in the year A. D. 93. That emperor was morose, suspicious and cruel; and his worst fury he vented on the Christians. How terribly the churches of Asia Minor suffered such pictures as that of 6:9 reveal.

As for the strangeness of some of the literary forms used in Revelation, it may be said that God speaks to every age in the language current in that age, and it was natural that the messages he gave to the church through John should be embodied in apocalyptic figures. Nor has this startling imagery ever failed to impress the reader of the Bible. Remark how rich the book is in verses that are very precious to the devout. You and I have learned to glimpse "things to come," the hereafter's bliss and doom, in this vision's kaleidoscope. "But it is not a picture-book. It is a book of symbols. Symbols are for the reason, not for the eye" (C. E. Jefferson).

Revelation is an impossible book to many Christians simply because they persist in making it such; and because they have failed to give it a reasonable study. Apart from its historical setting and significance, it has a wealth of enduring spiritual teaching. That Revelation is not a sheer mystery is evident from the recurrence of the phrase "to show" and the command "write!" The curtain is lifted to John for the church's sake, and not to amaze, mystify, or puzzle. "The purpose of the book; to give courage, not to satisfy curiosity" (Crannell).

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Salutation

Among the Jews seven was the sacred, symbolical number par excellence. There were many reasons for it. The seven churches represent the church universal. Asia here is of course the province, not the continent. The name of God is too holy to be spoken, or spoken overmuch; accordingly various circumlocutions are employed; here emphasizing his eternity (ver. 4, 8).

As the seven churches stand for the whole church, the Seven Spirits represent

the Holy Spirit. Thus John brings "grace and peace" from the fulness of God, all the personalities of the Trinity. That our Lord is here named "faithful witness" is significant. The word "witness" in the original is substantially our "martyr." "Prince of the kings" would be equivalent to "King of kings. The Greek verbs loose and wash are almost identical in spelling, and it is uncertain which is used here, but "washed" is to be preferred, especially since the preposition is "in—his blood."

"Peace that precious blood is sealing,
All our wounds forever healing."

II. The Ascription

It is to Christ alone. And as the Coming One—according to the promise of Matthew 24. Verse 7 goes back to Zechariah 12:10 (cp. John 19:37; Matt. 26:64). The mourning of "the tribes of the earth" (rather than "generations") will be the mourning of consternation, not of penitence or pity.

A and Q (ver. 8, 11), *the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet,* are constantly employed in early Christian literature as symbols of God, as the Eternal, or of Christ, as the fountain and consummation of all things. The letters have become common emblems in ecclesiastical art.

III. The Seer

It is noticeable that this message of comfort, reassurance and warning is imparted through a "companion" (R. V. "partaker") *in the dire tribulations the church was enduring.* God's prophets are usually men whose lips have been scorched (Isa. 6:6). John's banishment must not be pictured as a lazy, day-dreaming existence on a lonely isle. Tradition says that the prisoners sent to Patmos were condemned to the hardest kind of toil in the island's marble quarries. But would not that labor and hardness all the more sanctify John's vision?

While it is true that God speaks directly to his faithful, consider how generally he employs intermediaries. Here he is the source of the message; Jesus Christ the Transmitter; an angel the agent; John the witness; the church the recipient.

The dominant note of victory in Revelation places "kingdom" between "tribulation" and "patience" (ver. 9). Things may look dark and hopeless, but the kingdom of God will surely arrive.

Patmos is about twenty-five miles out in the Ægean Sea from Ephesus; a rocky island, ten by six miles in size. Today it is mostly owned by Christian monks. The cave where John resided, according to tradition, they have converted into a chapel. It was for preaching the word of God, bearing testimony to Jesus, that John was suffering persecution (ver. 9).

This is the first instance where the term "the Lord's Day" (ver. 10) *is used, in our sense, in Christian literature.* The resurrection was such a big fact to the disciples that its weekly commemoration had been made their Sabbath. *"In the Spirit"* would signify, "under the influence of the Spirit" (cp. 2 Cor. 12:2, 3; Ezek. 3:12, 14).

IV. The Voice and the Vision

"In a book" (ver. 11) *is better, "on a roll"; and "candlesticks" should be "lampstands."* Our candle was not in use in antiquity. The church must be a lamp to the world to be Christ's church. There are eighty-three places in the Gospels where Jesus applies *the title "son of man"* to himself. It is the glorified Redeemer in the midst of his redeemed! He is arrayed in a priestly garb, with a golden girdle about the breast, not the waist—as the high priest wore it when in service.

He is further symbolically characterized: white for righteousness and wisdom (ver. 14); the eyes of flame expressive of anger or indignation at sin; the brazen feet of his power that tramples down opposing forces of unrighteousness; and the voice like a torrent that all the world shall hear. The care of the Glorified One for his churches is indicated in the figure that he holds their "angels," "seven stars," in his right hand—"as a chain of glittering jewels" (cp. ver. 20). There has always been a difference of opinion as to who the angels of the churches are; some think, guardian angels; others that their pastors (bishops, superintendents) are meant. A still better explanation is that these angels are the heavenly counterparts of the lampstands; i. e., the churches, and become messengers to them.

The sword in his mouth is of course his word (Heb. 4:12; cp. 2 Thess. 2:8). Some of the older commentators suggested the Old Testament as one edge, the New as the other. Or it is two-edged because it acts in every direction. Or again, the double-edged sword is a symbol of judicial authority: the Glorified, "the Faithful and True," as Judge of the nations (19:11-15). Was John's glimpse of Transfiguration blended into that of his vision? (Matt. 17:1, 2; cp. 1 Tim. 6:16.)

The action of verse 17 compels us to regard the state of John during these Patmos revelations as one of religious ecstasy, or transport; not taking place during sleep; not day-dreaming; not an ordinary vision; not an exercise of emotional imagination. He was "caught up" as Paul was (2 Cor. 12:4) into an overwhelming possession by the Holy Spirit. If modern psychology can define such a state, all the more reason why we may associate it with God's transmission of his truth to men.

The seer's overwhelming amazement and holy fear are understandable. Here was one of the most realistic, concrete presentations of the divine Being ever vouchsafed to a man. But forthwith he is reassured; he knows that it is after all the Master — notwithstanding t strange, heavenly habiliments — becau of the touch of the hand and the sou of the familiar "Fear not!" Philli Brooks' comment on verse 18 is apropo "He who has passed through an expe ence holds the key to it."

V. The Seven Letters

Notice that these letters do not tually belong to the vision, or visions, the Revelator. He is to write them the Glorified's dictation (2:1, e. a whereas beginning with chapter 4 have the repeated "I saw." Moreov the letters are plain, practical, and fr from apocalyptic. Yet they prepare for what follows, in the "warning s tion" (4-11), the "spiritual contest" "Dispensation section" (12-19), and "consummation" (20-22).

"There are two aspects of the chur which may be said to pervade the whe Apocalypse: as she is in herself, as s is engaged in and affected by a strug with the world. The first three epist lead us to the thought of the church the former, the remaining four to thought of her in the latter aspec (Milligan).

These seven letters have always bo a valuable corrective, warning and e couragement to the Christian church always needed, never out-of-date. Th are a row of mirrors where almost a church can see itself. And the mo the church reads them the more clea it realizes that their words come dir from the Christ whose the church is.

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ What changes, should you say, h taken place in John from the da when he followed Jesus as one the Twelve and as the Revelator?

¶ What striking difference do you tice between the Book of Daniel a this Book of Revelation?

¶ Why are the essential lessons of Book of Revelation just as a plicable now as they were in t first century?

¶ Mention the outstanding characteris of each of the seven churches, cording to the various letters; a point out similarities in your o church, or churches with which y are familiar.

¶ It is characteristic of the letters, tice, that praise, appreciation and recognition of difficult conditions mingled with the censure and wa ing. Wouldn't this be a good e ample for us to follow?

¶ It is sometimes complained that Glorified One of the Revelation too awful, too stern a Figure to identified with the Christ Jesus the Gospels. But do we not wro ourselves and misconceive him if do not sometimes view him in t other aspect?

Notes and Comments

The Book of Revelation stresses, in articular, two truths most important for hristians not to forget: (1) Our Savur Jesus Christ is a living Lord. (2) Ie is with his church, in the midst of it; ven when it is not altogether as he ould have it. Our attitude toward the urch must be governed by this fact.

Notwithstanding the general unfamilrity of Christians with Revelation, it emains true that our conception of hrist, as present Lord and Saviour, is rofoundly influenced by its presentation.

Many things in the book become learer when we remember that final cenes of human history are here dected. And the Second Coming is to e vastly different from the First.

"The Apocalypse is the precious vessel which the treasure of Christian hope has been deposited for all ages of the church, but especially for the church under the cross."—*Godet.*

"The whole atmosphere of the book is bracing, and makes one feel fearless and hopeful in the face of the devil and the beasts from the abyss."—*Philip Schaff.*

"He (John) places himself in thought at the end of the visions he had witnessed and retraces for others the elevating pictures which had filled, as he beheld them, his own soul with rapture. . . It (the Book of Revelation) will record the conflict of Christ and his people with the evil that is in the world, and their victory over it. It will be the story of the church as she journeys through the wilderness to the land of promise, encountering many foes, but more than conqueror through him that loved her, and often raising to heaven her song of praise."—*Milligan.*

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

John's Vision on Patmos

Dr. Marcus Dods, in his *Introduction the New Testament,* draws a disnction between the prophets and the ocalyptists. The former were orators nd statesmen, and spoke directly and earlessly of existing rulers and social onditions; they called a spade a spade. he prophets tried to transmute their eligious fervor into social action. They ere realists. In contrast, the apocaptists were ideologists—seeing no hope satisfaction in the present, they sublinated temporal frustrations into distant stacies. Unfortunately, religious enusiasms and a zeal for justice via hical pressure do not always go toether. They should be teamed. The ocalyptists were compelled to veil their eaning under a series of visions. Exting circumstances could not be alluded directly. To ease the tension of the esent they projected courage into the ture by speaking of the coming of the essiah. These "literary artists" were, consequence, often obscure. Their gures of speech are difficult to compreend. Biblical criticism has waged many dispute about this Book of the Revelaon. Sufficient for us if we can draw few suggestive comments from the essages to the seven churches.

First, I quote from Dods:

"As the coming of the Lord is not an ent arbitrarily fixed, but prepared for d necessitated by the condition of the orld, the first care of the apocalyptist to exhibit the condition of the church, d to stir it to the requisite efforts and pectation. This he does in the letters the seven churches of Asia Minor, hich represent the church catholic (2:1 3:22); the number seven, here as elsewhere, representing totality. . . The book exhibits the church of Christ in its conflict, preservation and victory."

Do you recall the incident, attributed to Henry Ward Beecher, about a sermon of his in which he referred to the diamond crown on the brow of the Lamb? A parishioner talked to him on the street and with obvious appreciation referred to the preacher's beautiful words in his description of the crown of diamonds. Said Beecher: "Crown of diamonds! Who said anything about a crown of diamonds? I told of the vision of a *diamond crown*—one, perfect, glowing, magnificent jewel." Thus is the unity and perfection of the Lamb of God envisioned.

That Christ lives on forever, is with his people, and is (or may be) a regnant influence in their lives—this is what we need remember. The churches of Asia Minor had developed weaknesses. Their faith was weakening. Take account of your condition, mend your ways, but do not succumb to discouragement. Listen to the ever-living Christ! The ever-living Christ is among the churches.

1. *To the church at Ephesus:* "You have done well in the past; you have shown endurance; you have fought off insidious doctrines: but your love for me has waned; you are backsliders; repent and become as you were."

2. *To the church in Smyrna:* "You have suffered for my cause, but you are going to face still severer tests. Keep up your courage. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

3. *To the church in Pergamum:* "You are playing double. You declare faith in me, but at the same time you have adherents of false cults in your very midst, and you live right along with them as if they were all right. This may not be. Repent. Change."

4. *To the church in Thyatira:* "You are following a false leader; and she is a woman. Inquiry will let you know, if you do not now know, that she is immoral. It is not right that she should be among you, posing as one of the faithful, and so accepted by you."

5. *To the church in Sardis:* "You are supposed to be alive, but you are dead. Wake up . . . for I have found nothing you have done complete in the sight of my God" (Goodspeed).

6. *To the church in Philadelphia:* "You have done well in a difficult situation. I will help you. You have kept in mind my message: I will keep you safe in the time of testing."

7. *To the church in Laodicea:* "You are an in-between people. You are neutral in the presence of unavoidable issues. It cannot be done. Come out on one side or the other. Anything but a tepid, lukewarm dodger of responsibilities. If you seek me, I will be at hand to give you help and my blessing."

The living Christ!

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

John's Vision on Patmos

Not very many years after the tremendously powerful man Paul had finished his earthly ministry of preaching and writing, forces from both outside and inside the churches were operating to change them from the simple personal loyalty to Jesus Christ that had been so notable at the beginning. All of them had backslidden, more or less. They had compromised with social influences around them, and the church was not standing out in the community so clear-cut and sharp as it formerly had.

About this time, also, the edict enforcing emperor-worship was taking hold. The problem of trying to serve two masters was an acute one in many towns and cities of western Asia and eastern Europe. Churches were in serious danger of losing the sense of their real purpose in the world.

The risen Lord could not allow his redemptive work to become of no use. Hence he appeared to a man who had a strong enough spiritual sense to accept the revelation and send it along to the churches. So it has come down to us. To many this book is not a "revelation" but a puzzle. In fact one scholar, who advocates dividing the Bible into, perhaps, a dozen volumes and printing it as other books are printed—without chapter and verse divisions—suggests that the final volume might contain such books as Daniel and Revelation and be marked "For scholars only."

However we have the Master's own word for it that many things that are hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes—for that fact he thanked God. Perhaps the imagery found later in this final book of the New Testament may be too difficult of in-

terpretation, but surely there is something of great value in these brief messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor which we can apply to any group of churches—to our own church?

1. *Ephesus,* backslidden from first enthusiasm for Christ's way of life. Many things to commend in this prosperous church, but unless it returns to its first love the candle will be removed.

2. *Smyrna,* a poor church and one that would have more trouble but would remain loyal.

3. *Pergamum,* tested by presence of first temple for emperor-worship, in danger of compromise with state religion.

4. *Thyatira,* in danger because of trade-guild common meals at which food which had been offered to idols was served.

5. *Sardis,* a church that did not follow through, easy-going.

6. *Philadelphia,* the church with a big opportunity.

7. *Laodicea,* the rich, self-satisfied, lukewarm church.

As we look over the world today we can easily find the counterpart of these seven churches—possibly we do not need to go very far from home. Backslidden, poor, state-dominated, compromising, easy-going, missionary, and rich but lukewarm churches are everywhere. To all Christ sends his message. In each the response will be different. Each has some message to remind them of the glory and majesty of Christ; each has held before it the promise of the reward of overcoming.

Overcoming what? Persecution even to martyrdom, state-controlled religion, conformity to social customs of which Christ could not approve, immoral practices, self-satisfied toleration. Are these sins of a bygone generation, or are they found today? Are these sins to be charged up to groups, or are they common to individual Christians?

What is the cause of the weaknesses of the church today and of the lack of stamina of individual Christians? Speaking of the abating of missionary interest in churches today, Dr. John A. McAfee, of the Westminster Presbyterian Church of Topeka, Kans., declares that it is caused by not giving Christ his rightful place. He further says that our financial struggles cannot be honestly blamed on the depression. It is a tragedy that not more men are won to Christ in a year. The reason for both these failures is that we do not accord Jesus Christ his place. He does not mean a great deal to us. We give him a small portion of our time and strength, but we have lost our zeal and our enthusiasm. "It is historically true that when the supremacy of Jesus Christ has been called into question the church has been impotent. The old story is being repeated once again in our experience today. . . Do we believe that Jesus Christ is *a* way or *the* way? This, so it seems to me," says Doctor McAfee, "is the real question."

So let us go back to the revelation to John on Patmos and realize again that it is the Alpha and the Omega, who is, who was and who is to come that is speaking to us and asking that we give him not *a* place but *the* place in our lives.

As I write this I am looking out on one of the lovely lakes for which New Hampshire is famous. This is one of the smaller ones. A small brook pours in water, held back in a series of regulated ponds farther back on the hills. At times this water is soiled by the was dye from a neighboring mill. Along o side of the lake are several springs whic contribute crystal-clear water. Dwelle along the lakeside come to these sprin for their drinking-water. The lake wat may suffice for outward purposes, but f inward use something better is neede Thus it is in life. There are ma things in our social and cultural life th are pleasant, but we do not find o deepest needs met by them. Only t deep springs that come from the Wa of Life, that Christ still offers, are fit keep the inner life pure and clean.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

SAINT JOHN, THE AGED

I John . . . was in the isle . . . Patm for the word of God (Rev. 1:9).

I'm growing very old. This weary he
That hath so often leaned on Jesus'
breast,
In days long past that seem almost a
dream,
Is bent and hoary with its weight of
years.
Open wide
The eastern window. See! There cor
a light
Like that which broke upon my sou
eve,
When, in the dreary isle of Patmos,
Gabriel came
And touched me on the shoulder. Se
It grows
As when we mounted toward the pe
gates.
I know the way! I trod it once bef

—*Frances Eastwoo*

LESSON XII. DECEMBER 20. THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

1 John 4:7-19

GENERAL THEME: THE SUPREME GIFT OF LOVE (Christmas Lesson)

[This lesson prepared by W. QUAY ROSSELLE, D.D., Malden, Mass.]

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: John 15:12-17

KEY VERSE: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased.—Luke 2:14

7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

12 No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

13 Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

15 Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

16 And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love him, because he first loved us.

A Bible Message for Every D

Monday. The Supreme Gift of L 1 John 4:7-19. We do not win G favor by loving him. The love we for God is itself his gift to us. We love God only as he puts that love our hearts. We love him becaus *first* loved us.

Tuesday. The Gift of the Ma Luke 2:10-16. "The Word was flesh and dwelt among us . . . fu grace and truth" (John 1:14). of love may be written on a page; itself is found only in the breast person.

Wednesday. The Gift of the C John 3:16-18. Love is ever redem in its action. Christ was love inca —a love that gave itself to men, a men, even to the climax of Calvary.

Thursday. Love Manifested. Joh

21-24. Our love of God manifests itself in obedience to his will. Love in us is the manifestation of God in us, and that alone brings our wills into harmony with his will.

Friday. The Constraint of Love. 2 Cor. 5:14-19. Ultimately we are guided by character, not by rules and precepts. When Christ comes into a person his character becomes a new creation, which leads him into the paths of righteousness.

Saturday. Christ Never Fails Us. Rom. 8:35-39. A life controlled by Christ is one dominated by love—and "love never fails." The hard fortunes of the world cannot overthrow such a life, because they cannot prevail against God.

Sunday. Love One Another. John 15:12-17. We cannot love until God gives us the love. When we have that, our attitude toward all men will be that of helpful good-will, even to the extent of the complete dedication of our lives to redemptive service.

At the Threshold of the Lesson

The Christmas season celebrates a historical event which took place more than nineteen hundred years ago. A babe, the child of a humble mother, was lying in the manger of a stable in Bethlehem. In the eternal and loving purpose of God a holy and cosmic significance centered in that child. It is well that the annually recurring birthdays of that child send us back to study the historical origin of our Christianity.

This lesson gives a grand opportunity to teachers of adult and young people's classes. They may lead their pupils into the deeper significance of the historical Jesus. As the teacher ponders long the records of the Advent, as given in the Gospels, and the various Scripture readings cited, there will emerge in his thoughts new and arresting insights, which will send him to his class aglow with enthusiasm. No teacher should dare to teach a lesson of such supreme importance without that enthusiasm. Unless the meaning of the coming of Christ gets into the soul of the teacher, little of it will get into the souls of his pupils.

The Lesson Before Us

I. The Gift of Love

Our lesson declares that God is a God of love. This is in contrast with all pagan religions, which conceive of God as angry and vengeful, needing to have his wrath placated by human sacrifice. The change from such a conception to one that beholds God as a loving Father to mankind marks the most tremendous advance in religious thought in all the history of mankind. The change was brought about by Jesus Christ. The joy that fills the heart of every intelligent Christian at this Christmastide comes largely from the fact that Jesus taught us that we need not cringe in dread before an angry God, but rush to the outstretched arms of a loving and forgiving Father.

Love ever seeks to express itself in affectionate ways to the object loved. In many ways we can see God shower his love upon us. We count our blessings and find them many and precious. But God's love for us may express itself in experiences that are hard for us to bear. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "No chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness *unto them* which *are exercised thereby.*" When we reach the place where we can discern the love of God in the hardest experiences of life, we may know that we are spiritually educated.

The supreme gift of a loving God to mankind is Jesus Christ. The only thing that can tell us what anything is, is that thing itself. God is a person, and only personality can know what God is. In an important sense God's word cannot be crowded within the limits of any human language and written down on a page. Ideas of God may thus be written, but ideas of a thing are abstractions and not the thing itself. A concept of love is not love. Love can be found only in one place, and that place is the breast of a person. In the coming of Christ the word of God passed from the realm of abstract ideas to that of actual reality. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). In Christ we have God himself, not merely ideas about God. "In him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9). Surely we believe in the deity of Jesus Christ.

II. Two Approaches to the Knowledge of Christ

In the Gospels we are given two approaches to the manger at Bethlehem. There are the scientific and the mystical. The Wise-men were guided by the stars; the shepherds by the angels. The men of the East knew nothing of the angels, the shepherds knew nothing of astrology, yet they both were led to the manger.

These two ways are still open to us, and each of them leads toward God. Difficulty arises when either side denies the validity of the other. In many places religion has evolved into a barren and futile intellectualism, without fervor or power. On the other hand, there is ever the tendency for religion to take the course of irrational emotionalism and eventuate in all manner of ungoverned vagaries. Our minds are gifts of God to us, talents to be used and enlarged, not to be hidden away in the napkins of neglect. We are to love God with *all our mind.* But the mind, when sincerely at work, with all its powers, soon discovers its limitations, and must take note of other transactions of the soul which make their contributions to spiritual understanding. It is well to know the stars, but we must know the angels too.

III. How We Know God

Eternal life is linked with our knowing God. "This is life eternal, that they might *know* thee . . . and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). But the mind itself is incapable of comprehending the infinite. How, then, are we to know God? Spiritual things are spiritually discerned. God is a Spirit, and only the spirit of man, illuminated and reenforced by the Holy Spirit, can know him. Spiritual knowledge reveals itself in the experiences of the whole personality. In the human personality there are powers other than rational. These operate in mystical ways in seeking out spiritual truth.

The experiences of the spiritual life are real and vital actualities, and are themselves their own truth. We can know the truth these experiences reveal only as we have the experiences in our lives. The deepest experiences of the soul cannot be fully rationalized and thus abstracted from their own inherent reality. Only love can ever tell us what God is. If love is God, then love is the only thing that can interpret God to us. And this love must be more than an intellectual concept—an actual and vital experience of love itself. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (1 John 4:8).

IV. Jesus Christ the Supreme Gift of God's Love

We are taken back to John 3:16. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Believeth in him! That means more than accepting statements about him. It means *living* in him, sharing his life and love as our own.

God initiates love. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). The power to love and the disposition to love come from God to us as a precious gift. We cannot love until we are given the love to love with.

All love was embodied in Christ. It was love that led him in his redemptive sacrifice. Under the compulsion of love he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in the fashion of a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:7,8).

V. The Spiritual Value of the Christmas Celebration

The annual observance of Christmas turns our minds to the historic Christ. It is our custom to celebrate the birth anniversaries of great characters who

have rendered distinguished service to humanity. This is more than an expression of our appreciation of them, it is an effective means of educating the successive generations. The observance of Washington's Birthday impresses upon our minds the origin of our republic. In schools and churches appropriate exercises are carried out which have a molding effect upon the minds of children and youth, thus exerting an educational influence that goes far to make for an enlightened patriotism and good citizenship.

There is no church or church school where the birthday of the Son of God is not celebrated, by means of sermons, specially prepared lessons, pageantry, "White Gift" services, inspired music, and the like. Almost every organization apart from the church has some sort of observance of the Christmastime in which its sacred significance is not wholly neglected. There are many who regard Christmas Day as just another holiday, but the church sees to it that its origin and meaning are so interpreted as to make it a holy day.

The Christmastime opens human hearts to the voice of love. All the world over, wherever there are Christians, love lays its hand upon human hearts and opens them to kindness and generous impulse. At this time we have the desire to make others happy. So pervasive is this spirit that even those who do not profess to be Christian become imbued with it, and thus experience the central Christian grace, at least for the time.

The giving of gifts, as a token of love, is a natural manifestation of the generous kindness which the Christmas spirit awakens. Its appeal is almost irresistible. Even miserly Scrooges are impelled to yield to its demands. Surely any annual event which so opens the hearts of men to ministries of loving-kindness—thus cleansing and ennobling human spirits—is a gift of God to the human race. As this, another Christmas Day, passes around the earth, it is lifting millions to the high plateaus of life where they will hear for themselves the song of the angels, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will to men."

Practical Questions for Class Discussion

¶ The church interprets the sacred and spiritual meaning of Christmas. How may we best thus interpret it in our family gatherings?

¶ Commercial institutions capitalize the Christmas season for their material profit. Is there danger that this may obscure its holy significance?

¶ How pure are our motives in giving Christmas gifts? Is it always an expression of genuine love, or may we do it because it is expected of us, and to "save our faces"?

¶ We ask God's blessing upon our Christmas dinners. If we were to provide a Christmas dinner for a poor family that otherwise would have none, would not that sanctify our own, and be an acceptable "grace before meat"?

¶ In your own observation, have you seen evidences of the softening effect of the Christmas celebration upon loveless lives, hard hearts?

Notes and Comment

The meaning of Christmas is the love of God. The predominant note of Christmas must be love. If we forget this we might as well pass the festival by; if love, to God and men, be not in our hearts, we have little right to approach the altar of its joy.

We are prone to throw round the scenes of that first Christmas a transfiguring light of poetry and romance that does not properly belong to them. The event and its surroundings were on the whole mean and insignificant. But this heightens the completeness of the love-sacrifice of God. Sacrifice always marks true love. The gladdest Christmas celebrations this week are going to be in those homes where loved ones are loving one another in self-denial; the costliest gifts those that have cost, not the most money, but the most of self.

Because the Gift of gifts has been given, gratitude is in order. The wandering Wise-men of the East honored the Child with costly presents. That was their way. The poor shepherds had no such gifts in their wallets, but they sang songs and repeated prayers of thanksgiving as they returned to their flocks, for that now God had visited his people with redemption. That was their way. It is a fine thing about our gratitude to God that there are so many ways in which we may express it.

A Christmas Prayer, by P. R. Hayward: "I thank thee, O God, that in the long ago the Christ was born! Wilt thou grant that he may also be born in my heart in the here and now! I thank thee for this priceless Gift. In growing service to my fellows may I help to make thy Gift effective! I thank thee for all the changes that have come in human life because of him. Grant that I may so catch his spirit and purpose that I may help to carry on his great enterprise of kingdom building! In the Christmas spirit. Amen."

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

THE SUPREME GIFT OF LOVE

What was born? Who was born?

I well remember how John Silvernail, then acting professor of public speaking at Rochester Theological Seminary, began a sermon one day in the chapel. Said he: "The Son of God became the Son of man that he might make the sons of men the sons of God." God revealed himself to us.

Yet we wonder at the claims put forth by so many creeds and sects. Divisions have happened in all religions. Ancient Judaism had its Pharisees, Essenes and Sadducees. The exiled Jews developed Babylonian and Egyptian forms of Judaism. The three great divisions of the Christian church are the Roman Catholic, the Eastern Orthodox and the Protestant. We are familiar with the host of divisions among Protestantism. Moslemism has several sects. Thus strong individualists have led separatist movements in all religions.

As concerns Christians, it all goes back to Bethlehem. Who was born and what was born? Essentially, it was God so loving the world that he gave. What varying interpretations different men have put upon this gift of God! What is the gist of the Christmas message, anyway? It means much, little, or nothing to you. As history has devised beautiful, weird, or impossible (to you and to me) pictures of the manger scene and the ministry of the Lord, so must each of us find his own individual answer to that question.

Walter Scott concludes his "Christmas in the Old Time" with the lines:

> A Christmas gambol oft could cheer
> The poor man's heart through half the year.

As if Christmas meant revelry, largess one day of the year and serfdom for the remaining days! I am wondering whether or not Christmas in the modern time does not yield to hilarity, a little liberality on one day of the year, as if to atone for neighbor neglect habitually. A sense of guilt possesses me as I write, because often the getting and giving of gifts (fine contribution to happiness—I would not stop them) crowd out the spirit of devotion and heart-searching that could well be concomitants of the tree, its candles and other fixings. Going to Scott again, we catch a fine note:

> All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight
> And general voice, the happy night,
> That to the cottage, as the crown,
> Brought tidings of Salvation down.

Yes, the real message of Christmas is glad tidings to all people. Christianity is for the present and the future. Faith, to be expressed adequately, must then be operative as intralife and not interholidays. Old man Scrooge suffered a highly desirable and most remarkable conversion under Dickens' powerful pen.

How did the old gentleman behave on December 26 and 27? And on pay-days throughout the following year? Did Christmas get in his blood, or was it only a skin manifestation? Happiness here is splendid—I believe it reflects the spirit of Christmas. Eternal life, too, is embodied in this supreme gift of love.

The main curse of life is drabness; poverty of spirit; no cultivated taste for the values that are spiritual. Christmas is especially full of meaning for drab lives. The blend between material comforts and inner peace is closer than many moralists—who never have experienced deprivation—would have us believe. So let Christmas reflect the double note of Scott: a gambol of cheer and salvation for cottage and crown.

Who was born? You and I must appraise Jesus. What was born? You and I must face Christmas, never forgetting that a normal year has three hundred and sixty-four other days.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

The Supreme Gift of Love

Sometimes we do not appreciate wonderful opportunities and privileges that come to us—when they are too near—but afterward, as we think over what has happened, we better understand how favored we have been. As we reread the first four verses of the First Epistle of John we catch a glimpse of this feeling of privilege that John felt as he recalled the days when he and the other disciples walked and talked with Jesus in Palestine. They did not know the meaning of it all then. Some of them understood better later on.

We wonder if it was on some anniversary occasion, some time that made him think of that never-to-be-forgotten night when the bright star and the angels' song led Wise-men and shepherds to the city of David, that John was thinking it all over as older men are likely to do. Certain men who claimed to be learned had said that it was "all nonsense" about Christ's coming to tell people what God was like. It never could have been. But John said: "I have seen him, and I know him, and I also know that he came from God and showed us that God is love and that he loves us." This personal testimony means much.

Doctor Nathan R. Wood, of the Gordon College of Theology and Missions, recently told a group of women at Northfield an experience that is very suggestive. He said that on a trip in the White Mountains of New Hampshire he was talking with a friend, a man who holds an important government position. This man admitted his dissatisfaction with his religious experience and plied Doctor Wood with questions and arguments. All the afternoon they talked, and as the supper-bell rang the man said, "Thank you for all the time you have given me and the trouble you have taken to answer my questions. I should, however, like to ask you just one more question, 'Is Jesus Christ real to you?'" Doctor Wood replied: "Jesus Christ is more real to me than that mountain yonder; more real to me than you are standing there; at times he is more real to me than I am to myself." The two parted. The next day the man went fishing up Wild Cat Brook. Doctor Wood did not see him until evening, when he drew the doctor aside and told him this thrilling story:

"I went fishing yesterday alone up that mountain stream. All day long I could not get away from what you said about Christ being real to you. The wind in the trees over my head sang, 'O Love that wilt not let me go'; and up there in the woods, alone, I gave my heart to Christ. Now he is as real to me as you said he is to you. I appreciated your answers to my arguments, but it was your personal testimony that I could not get away from—that Christ is real to you."

It was the reality of Christ that made John able to speak so confidently of God's love and what that love had done for all who believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Christmastime is the best possible time to impress people with this wonderful love, because then there is more kindliness shown by people than perhaps at any other time. There is then abroad much of the spirit of the little girl who was asked by her teacher, "What is the meaning of the word 'happy'?" "To be happy," replied Barbara, "is to feel as if you wanted to give all your things to your little sister." Speaking reverently, that was somewhat the way God felt when he was so happy and so full of love that he wanted to share the best that he had with us folks down here on earth. So, at that Christmas season nineteen hundred odd years ago he gave his only begotten Son.

As we look over the world today and see the confusion, the fear, the destitution, we ask ourselves if it is really true that God loves us and that Christmas and the story of Bethlehem are more than a tradition? It *is* true. Christmas *is* the witness of the life of God in the souls of men. We know it not by arguments, but by the simple testimonies of those to whom Christ is real. We should remember that all was not rosy in the world when Christ Jesus came. The star and the song came to a world that, while not actually waging war, was rife with rumors of war. Morals and religion were at a low ebb. It had been years, yes, generations, since any prophet has brought any significant message from God, even in the country which claimed to be his chosen people.

This lesson teaches us also another Christmas lesson, that of good-will among men. The love that God expresses for us in giving Jesus should make us feel kindly to other people; in home, church, town, everywhere. We are selfish persons. We are selfish nations. We want wealth and power. The more of these we get for ourselves the more bitterness, poverty and depression there is. The lessons of Christmas are *giving* and *loving*. To these should be added the third, which is mentioned in the eighteenth verse of our lesson. *No fear.*

We have been a longer time learning that lesson of the angelic announcement than some of the others. But we are coming to see that children of the God who loves us need have no fear of what may happen. The Christmas spirit is within us, or it does not exist for us at all. A woman, shopping for gloves, was crossly pushing them around as she said, "Christmas? I wish there never was such a thing. Crowds and heat and confusion! Not much Christmas spirit left in the world, I guess?" She had not learned that Christmas spirit comes from the inside.

As you watch for the bright star shining in the heavens, open your heart to the peace, love and joy of that first Christmas, and let them cast out fear and bitterness from your life; and all that is out of harmony with Christmas.

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

A Christmas Prayer

He hath given us of his spirit (1 John 4:13).

It is late. A few minutes more and it will be Christmas. I'll switch off the light—and pray.

Dear God and Father: I am kneeling as I knelt once at a mother's knee. I am man grown in the ways of the world, yet a child before thee. Would that I were able to come before thee with the pure laughter of a little child. But the world at times has been too much for me. It has smirched me with some of its stains, and taken the child countenance from me. Yet my heart turns to thee tonight as a little child. Let me remain in thy presence a little while, to feel the warmth of thine understanding love, the influx of thy forgiving grace, the strengthening touch of thy firm right hand.

Help me to be more like Him, dear Father; to prefer simplicity of life to the renown of men, and purity of heart rather than great riches; to love all needy ones with a ministering love; to manifest something of thine own goodness and grace in all the commonplaces of daily living. Help me to be active in the pursuit of peace for all men. Help me live more surely in the dynamic of his Spirit. Let me never depart from thee.

In his name I make my prayer. Amen.
—*O. W. Warmingham, in "The International Journal of Religious Education."*

Lesson XIII. December 27. THE SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

(Verses printed, Heb. 2: 1-4; 11: 32 to 12: 2)

General Theme: THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN SOUTHERN EUROPE (Review)

Prepared by Mitchell Bronk, D. D.

Devotional Reading for the Opening Service: Isaiah 11: 1-10

KEY VERSE: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.—Rev. 11: 15

2: 1 Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward;

3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

11: 32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:

33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,

34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should be made perfect.

12: 1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

A Bible Message for Every Day

Monday. The Danger of Drifting. Heb. 2: 1-4. I like that "brightness of his glory" (ver. 3). Sometimes when you think of Jesus, his deeds and character, and the love for sinful men that the cross revealed—doesn't it almost blind you?

Tuesday. Heroes of the Faith. Heb. 11: 32-40. Thank God! the list has never come to an end; let us pray that it never will. "Is my name written there, on that page bright and fair?"

Wednesday. "Looking Unto Jesus." Heb. 12: 1-4. The advice, "Look where you're going," is wrongly heeded by some Christians; they see all the difficulties of the road, and get into all the by-paths, when they should be keeping their eyes on Jesus.

Thursday. "Fear Not, Little Flock." Luke 12: 31-34. That's a pretty big word, "kingdom." Yet not too big to one who has learned to know "the exceeding riches of God's grace"—"the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 2: 7; 3: 8). We used to sing, "My Father is rich in houses and lands . . . with Jesus my Saviour I'm a child of the King."

Friday. The Growth of the Kingdom. Matt. 13: 31, 32. We should be thankful that Jesus made such large use of these figures from agriculture; they are so full of certainty and hope.

Saturday. The Nations Evangelized. Micah 4: 1-4. The Jews had been pretty roughly handled by the "nations"; nevertheless these great prophets were magnanimous, saw the Gentiles gathered into the Kingdom that they expected. In this and many other respects they were Christians "B. C."

Sunday. The Reign of the Messiah. Isa. 11: 1-10. That all these things obtain—belongings of the fulfilled Kingdom—is it not attributable to the fact that the knowledge of the Lord God Jehovah is everywhere? What then is our task?

At the Threshold of the Lesson

The gospel of Christ is always starting things. It can never stay in one place. Its watchword is "Onward, Christian soldiers!"

Can't you see the "men of Macedonia" all around you and afar off, calling to you to come?

"Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 15: 26) is not only a fine characterization of Paul and Barnabas, but also of the typical missionary. A host of them come to mind: John Eliot and the young Jesuits among our American aborigines; Judson in prison at Ava; James Hannington in equatorial Africa; John Paton on the island of Tanna; and all the rest.

They climbed the steep ascent of heav'n
Through peril, toil and pain:
O God, to us may grace be giv'n
To follow in their train!

—*Reginald Heber.*

The Lessons Before Us

I. The Macedonian Call

On the road again. The division of Paul's missionary activity into three journeys. The dispute over John Mark. Silas. Timothy. A land journey. Hindrances. How the Holy Spirit said No! Paul's ill health. Asia, Bithynia, Troas. The Call of Europe. Paul's vision, and "the man of Macedonia." The "We" sections of the Book of Acts. Philippi. Jewish worship there. A woman the first convert. The synagogue on the river's bank. The kind of missionary Paul was, according to Romans 15.

II. Becoming a Christian

The preachers imprisoned. An unfair judgment. Songs in the night. The songs bear fruit. Paul's "Credo." The sequel. The preacher's personal message—the Philippian epistle. How Paul attained unto the resurrection.

III. The Spoken and the Written Word

Winning through love. Across country to Thessalonica. The city, ancient and modern. Again in the synagogue. "Devout Greeks." Successes. Jewish opposition again. Jason. The charge against the missionaries. Berea. Nobler Jews. Bible students. Keeping in touch with the church at Thessalonica. Paul writes to that church.

IV. Christianity as Love

Christianity in a cosmopolitan city. Ancient Corinth. A center of materialism. Its vices. A hard field. Tentmaking and preaching. Aquila and Priscilla. Failure and exasperation. Rejoined by Silas and Timothy. Success; responsibility, and divine reassurance. The vision. Gallio. God takes into account the "hard field," the difficult situation, of the one who is faithfully doing his work.

V. Law, Love, and Temperance (International Temperance Sunday)

The limitations of law. Of itself inadequate. America has learned this by experience. Older methods of control. Local option. State-wide prohibition. National prohibition. The problem of liquor traffic unsolved. Present evils. Removal of the stigma. The social appeal. Advertising. Love the ultimate, only way out.

VI. The Christian Warfare

The gospel facing error. Ephesus; a strategic point. The large results of the work there. Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus. Their contacts with Apollos. Half-way Christians. John's baptism and the baptism of the Spirit. In synagogue and lecture-hall. The "name of Jesus" and black-art. The sincerity of the converted magicians and the bonfire of the books. Paul writes to the Ephesians from Rome. Sin and darkness, in the letter and in the New Testament.

VII. The Heroism of Christian Faith

Bearing testimony in the Holy City. The journey down from Corinth. The preaching at Troas. Meeting with the elders at Ephesus. At Cæsarea. Entertained by Philip. Warnings. He conciliates the Jerusalem pillars. Was he justified in doing it? The mobbing. Court area, castle, chief captain. Paul's linguistic advantages. His defense. Roman citizen! Attitude of Claudius Lysias. In dire straits. Ananias. Another reassuring vision.

VIII. An Ambassador in Chains

The two years in Cæsarea. In Rome at last. The world's center, the gospel's opportunity. The nature of his imprisonment. The soldier guards. Free to teach and preach. The sermon of his bonds. The attitude of the Jews at Rome. His own house. Contact with friends. The question of a second imprisonment.

IX. Christian Brotherhood

Christ transforming social relationships. As a personal letter, and as a book of the Bible. Its attitude toward slavery. The gospel as the leaven of society. God Christianity of Paul not one-sided. Good Christians, good friends. Philemon, Onesimus, Colossæ, and the home church. The method of Paul's appeal. Delightful assumptions. Good in Onesimus, good out of evil.

X. Paul's Parting Counsels.

Paul's' evangelistic vision. The universal program and destiny of the gospel. Did Paul visit Spain? The break-off of the Acts narrative. The pastoral epistles. Timothy. The two epistles to Timothy. Paul's relations with an regard for Timothy. Paul's relations with and regard for Timothy. Parting instructions. The four figures of speech in which the apostle refers to his end. Need of friends. Asks for personal belongings. In the lion's mouth, but confident of the gospel's victory.

XI. John's Vision on Patmos

Revelation, the book of the glorified Saviour. An apocalyptic writing. Hidden truth, but truth unveiled. The purpose of such writings. Seven, churches, Spirits. The ascription to the complete godhead. The seer as companion in tribulation. Patmos. The voice and the vision. The Glorified represented in symbols. The letters to the seven churches. Their messages for the churches of today.

XII. The Supreme Gift of Love (Christmas Lesson)

The real significance of anniversaries. Nothing apart from character and principles. Washington, Lincoln. The meaning of Christmas. Christ Jesus as a Gift from God. Love the inspiration of that Gift. Love the meaning of Christmas. A sacrificial love. Love the meaning of the Babe. A year's love-gifts. The love to men.

TEACHERS' HELPS

In the Men's Class

Charles C. Stillman, Columbus, Ohio

The Spread of Christianity in Southern Europe

Glenn Fuller is one of my good friends. As this is being written he is on his way to China to assume the duties of a very important administrative position in Methodist missions. For several years he has been the executive secretary of a community chest. Many of his associates wondered why he would take a wife and three children "away over there, next to no place"—as one of his admirers said. So Fuller wrote the following (and said I could use it):

Why I Am Returning as a Missionary to China

"I think every man wants to make his life count for as much as possible. No matter how much good he feels he can do here, he can contribute ten times the amount of good over there. There are always plenty of good folks to carry on here.

"It is a real sacrifice to leave such a friendly community as is Fort Wayne—to leave a good job and sell out and reestablish in a foreign land. We should know, because we have done it before. Nine years ago we returned from the Methodist mission field in China. Now the opportunity has come again to fill an office for which we are trained and fitted. It will be a big sacrifice financially, but we feel that service should be considered above money. At least no one ever became a foreign missionary because of the financial advantage of the job."

And Why Foreign Missions, and Why of All Places China?

"We believe firmly in missions. Missions do more for world peace and international understanding than any other one factor. Missionaries do not just substitute one religious faith for another; they build the principles of Christ—love of one's fellows and sacrificial service—into the philosophies of the Orient.

"Missions create in the Chinese the desire for life on a higher plane through schools, hospitals and churches. In other words, missions are civilizing on a spiritual plane those nations whose outlook for the masses is sordid and hopeless. These folks over there are also God's children, and the church, to live, must follow Christ's command of 'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.'

"Foreign missions is not the church's afterthought, it is Christ's forethought. Sure, there is a lot to be done at home, but there are a lot of folks to do it—if they would. They know how. If there were a greater support and recognition of missions, the desire and inspiration to become better here would follow. We can't support good things and do good deeds without unconsciously receiving some benefit ourselves."

And Why China with Its Turmoil and Insecurity?

"Because we know the Chinese, having lived there among them for six years, and know them to be a sturdy race, sound in mind and body. There is something substantial on which to build. And, after all, China is one-fourth of the world population. Why not tackle the big job? China is to play the big part in the world of nations. It might be called Japan when that time comes, but you can't change China. It will still be China and the Chinese race, just as it has been for centuries—before Christ—absorbing into its four hundred millions all other nations who conquer it at war."

The above quotation has little to do directly with the spread of missions in southern Europe. It has everything to do with missions as the church in action and as a vision of service for men like my friend Glenn Fuller of the community chest of Fort Wayne, Ind.

There is much food for thought in Fuller's statement: "Sure there is a lot to be done at home, but there are a lot of folks to do it, *if they would.*" Is it not strange that we pass up missionary opportunities at our very elbows? Our culture and our life-work need to be supplemented by (preferably permeated with) the missionary spirit of Jesus as

exemplified in Peter, Paul, and others. We need that spirit to keep us active, somewhat as the English soldiers of Queen Elizabeth needed the Bible—along with food.

For this interesting story is told of the appreciation that Queen Elizabeth had for bread. It seems that on an occasion when she was reviewing the troops a young soldier stepped from the line and knelt before her. When given permission to speak, he reported a shortage in the rations for the troops. The queen was highly indignant that her soldiers were being expected to carry on wars without proper nourishment, and commanded a change in the rations, saying that the English Army would thereafter be trained and strengthened on the three B's: beef, bread, and the Bible.

Before My Class of Women

Cora F. Sherwood, Salem, Massachusetts

REVIEW: THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

We are nearing the end of another year, and soon businessmen will be taking inventory of their stock to see how they stand in a business way. Suppose we as a class take an inventory of some of the facts and ideas we have acquired from this last quarter's lessons.

We remember that during the first half of the year we studied how Jesus met human needs according to Luke's Gospel. We saw Jesus portrayed as a very human person, dependent on God in prayer, and showing real sympathy and affection toward his friends. Doctor Wood, of Gordon College, says that Jesus was the most human person that ever lived, as well as the most divine.

In the second half of the year's lessons we have been following the spread of Christianity after Jesus left his disciples and went back to his home in heaven, and sent the Holy Spirit to help the helpless men he had left behind. This spreading-out covered Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

Be sure to have a map before the class as you briefly sketch the trails followed. Note the men who were leaders in the different phases of the extension, Philip, Peter, Paul and Paul's various helpers.

This last quarter begins, it hardly need be said, with the famous Macedonian call of the man in Europe to the missionary Paul in Asia. From a distance of some one hundred and fifty miles—far beyond the horizon-line of human eyes—came this epoch-making appeal. And across the rough intervening inland sea went the men who were willing to answer, only to find that the man had not stayed to welcome them, and so they hunted up some women, who had gathered for prayer.

"How soon can you send us a missionary?" This is the question put to the executive secretary of the Wisconsin Baptist State Convention by over one thousand Finnish people in the northern part of the state. It is their "Macedonian cry," and they have cried it for five years now. These people have no evangelical message preached to them; they are as isolated as on a western frontier—non-Christian land. In the midst of our Christian civilization there is no church, no minister, and we have no money to send them the gospel message! Paul had his Macedonian cry, we have ours. What did his lead to? What will ours?

In the second lesson we note that the conversion of the jailer cost the missionaries something. In this, as in other similar times, there is no self-commendation for Paul. He never arrives at the place which he can feel is his goal: "I press on."

The third lesson is a good illustration of the fact that Paul kept his Christian friends in mind, and wrote to them, as well as preached, while he was present. We miss a great opportunity by not keeping in touch with those who have been won to Christ. As individuals and churches we are great sinners in that respect.

In Corinth Paul seemed not to make much of an impression; but if he had not gone there, and if he had not remembered to write to those friends he made there, how much poorer the world would have been. Then we should have missed the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians—one of the fruits of apparent failure!

A new national administration is soon—perhaps—to come in. We may well stress Paul's advice on loyalty to government. The man chosen to be President will not please all, even in our women's classes. We shall not like all the state officers. But Christians should not be like the man who said he hadn't voted for thirty years because he did not like politics. How does love change us so that we *prefer not* to break laws? Note that the drinking man breaks the law of love—as well as the law of the land—by the things he does while drunk.

Paul's ministry in Ephesus, and a fragment of a letter written to the disciples there later, show that the Christian life is no child's play, but a real struggle. The effort, however, is worth it and we do not fight unarmed or unguarded.

Paul, the heroic, stands for his colors, whether in Jerusalem among his own countrymen, or in Rome. Bond or free, he is the same courageous preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Justified by his death, sanctified by his life, Paul, the servant accepts his lot, and even in prison "carries on"; calling together the Jews who lived in Rome and preaching to them.

His personal interest in others, even in a runaway slave, is the occasion for the brotherhood appeal of the ninth lesson. It suggests that sometimes we can use our friends to help others, when we are powerless ourselves.

With the tenth lesson we leave Paul for this series. Brave and courageous to the end; far from urging young men to stay out of the ministry because of its hardships, we find him offering every encouragement to Timothy and Titus. He does not try to make them think it will be easy, but he does try to show them that it is rewarding.

The messages John received on Patmos still challenge the churches today.

For the Christmas lesson let me give you a poem, written by a choice Christian who has been a joy to her friends for nearly ninety years, Mrs. Fannie S. Price:

As we dream by day, by night,
Praying to be guided right
By the wondrous Christmas star
Which led Wise-men from afar—
Whether long or short the trail
Give us courage not to fail.

May our dreams, for near or far,
Guided by this selfsame star,
Lead us on through doubtful maze
Of storm-tossed minds and troubled days,
Until the world hears once again,
"Peace on earth, good-will toward men!"

The Lesson Lived

Susanna G. Fisher

ALIVE FOR EVERMORE

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore (Rev. 1:18).

Doctor Dale said: "Christ is alive," I said to myself; "alive!" And then I paused. "Alive!" And then I paused again. "Alive!" Can that really be true? Living as really as I myself am? I got up and walked about repeating, "Christ is living! Christ is living!"

At first it seemed strange and hardly true, but at last it came upon me as a burst of sudden glory; yes, Christ is living. It was to me a new discovery. I thought that all along I had believed it; but not until that moment did I feel sure about it.

I then said: "My people shall know it; I shall preach about it again and again until they believe it as I do now."

For months afterward, and in every sermon, the living Christ was his one great theme. When a friend expressed surprise at hearing an Easter hymn sung on a November morning, Doctor Dale said: "I want my people to get hold of the glorious fact that Christ is alive, and to rejoice over it."—*Selected.*

PAUL'S INDIVIDUALISM

Who will have all men to be saved. (1 Tim. 2:4).

"He believed that it was the will of God that all men were to be saved, and he believed that Jesus would never be satisfied until that goal had been reached. Therefore he claimed all the nations for his Lord."— *D. A. Hayes.*

Order of Worship Service

(Merely Suggestive)

Prepared by NATHAN PIERCE, JR.

OPENING MUSIC. Piano, organ, or orchestra. The pieces should be spirited enough to quiet the confusion, but sufficiently sober to put those present in a worshipful mood.

PRAYER, preferably by the superintendent, followed by the Lord's Prayer (in unison).

HYMN. Suggested: "Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve"; "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee!"; "Saviour, Teach Me Day by Day."

RESPONSIVE READING.

I waited patiently for the Lord;

And he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay,

And set my feet upon a rock and established my goings.

And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto God:

Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

Blessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust,

And respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.

Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to usward:

They cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.

Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened:

Burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required.

Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me:

I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.

HYMN. Suggested: "Break Thou the Bread of Life, Dear Lord, to Me"; "Saviour, Thy Dying Love Thou Gavest Me."

SCRIPTURE READING. Suggested: Isaiah 6:1-8; Acts 26:9-19.

SPECIAL EXERCISES, such as Birthday Offering, Missionary, Evangelistic, or Temperance Talk.

HYMN. "My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less"; "Christian, Dost Thou See Them?"; "Hail the Glorious Golden City!"

PRAYER (by one of the teachers, the pastor, or a visitor).

CLASS PERIOD.

CLOSING WORSHIP.

MUSIC, for reassembling of classes (dignified, but not too quiet).

SUPERINTENDENT'S FIVE MINUTES, for brief, stimulating reports, announcements, and, at least on some Sundays, an invitation to make the decision for Christ.

SECRETARY'S AND TREASURER'S REPORTS.

HYMN. "I Would Be True, for There Are Those Who Trust Me"; "On Our Way Rejoicing"; "Hark, Hark, My Soul!"

BENEDICTION. Mizpah, or Numbers 6:24-26 (in unison).

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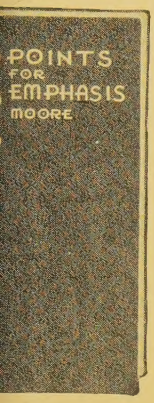

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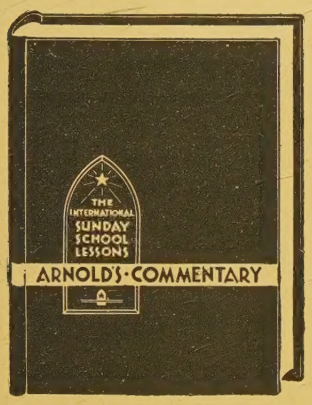

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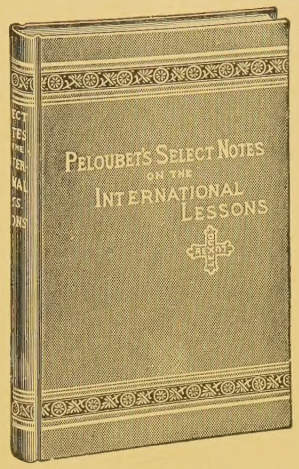

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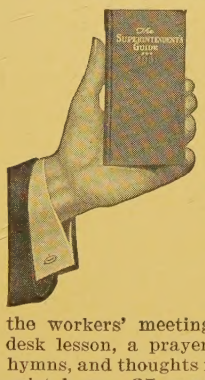

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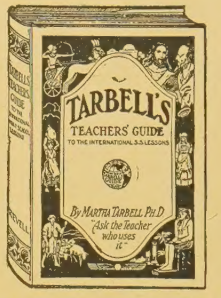

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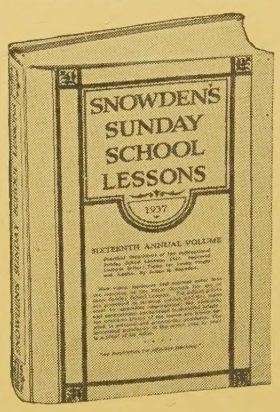

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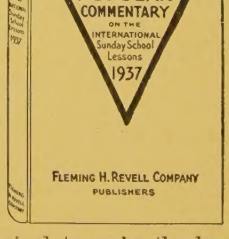

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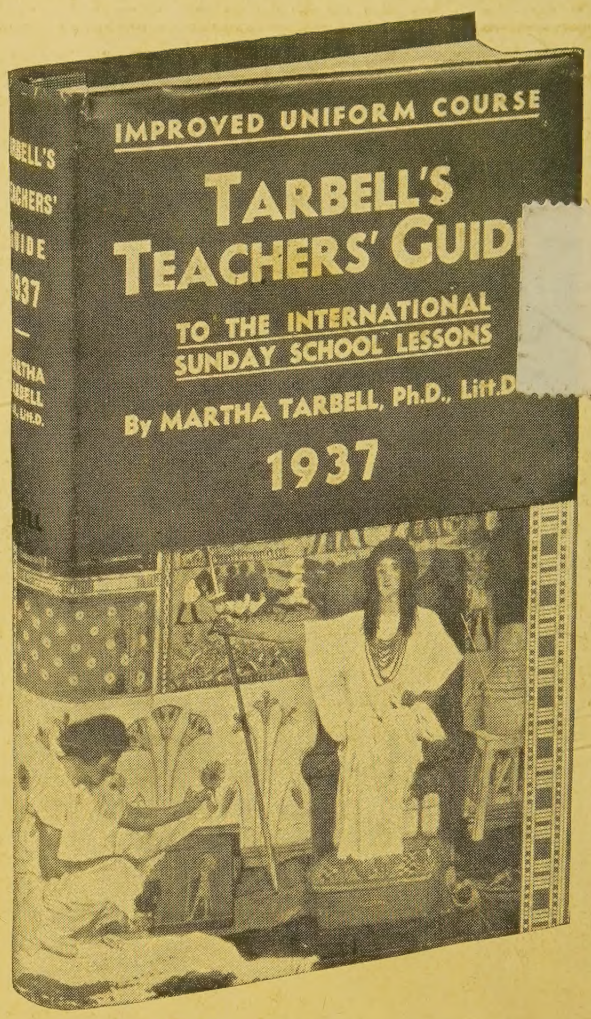

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